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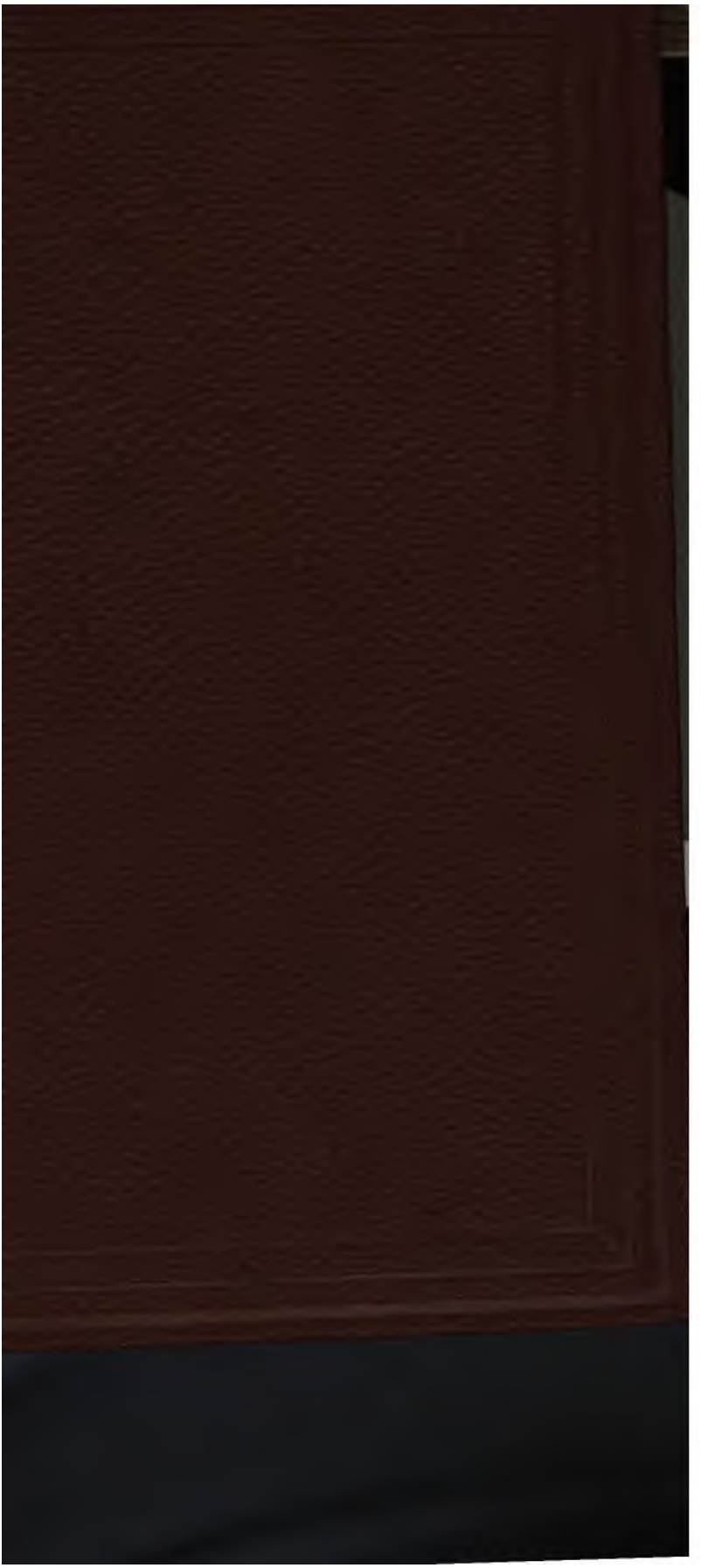


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CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

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CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

A Tale.

By COUNT NICOLA TOLSTOI.

Translated from the Russian

By MALWIDA VON MEYSENBUG.

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PREFACE.

I TRUST I have not erred by translating this little book for English readers. Whoever likes to come out into the fresh air of a fine day in spring, when all is fragrant, blooming, and promising, will enjoy reading this, the reflection of a youthful soul full of noble tendencies and earnest aspirations. The author here relates the events of his own early days. It is a simple narrative without thrilling effects, without any improbable intervention in favour of oppressed virtue and in punishment of triumphant vice—in fact, it is a mere household story; but the author knows how to surround his individual pictures with a charm which innate poetic feeling alone can spread over the daily occurrences of life. Already in his childhood, the poet sees and feels a something—a living pulse—where superficial natures find nothing but childish games, passing tears and joys, mere changes of scene and person, and do not perceive the light and shadow of a deeper life. For the same reason the poet, having arrived at consciousness, re-lives

his own life, only now understanding the import of the emotions which moved the child's heart; and this power of realizing events which influence our life belongs especially to the poet, whilst the minute analysis of feelings, and the speculative enquiry into the true essence of our sensations, belong rather to the philosopher. In Count Tolstoi we find these qualities so remarkably combined, that we may with equal justice pronounce him poet and philosopher.

Moreover, he shares with most Russian authors a striking power of observation, and a tendency to that bold truthfulness which calls things by their right names, and thus avoids the confusion of moral ideas that arises from giving, to false sentimentality the appellation of sublime passion, and to corruption that of virtue, as we have been too much accustomed to see done, particularly in modern French literature. And what gives to his narrative a peculiar charm, is the tinge of a foreign and as yet very little known nationality, with its unfamiliar customs, popular beliefs and social forms. In the figure of the old nurse, for example, will be found a sketch of touching interest, finished up like one of Rembrandt's portraits.

But I leave the book to speak for itself, and only add a few words about Count Tolstoi's further career,

which appears to remain entirely faithful to the admirable promise of his youth. Born of one of the highest aristocratic families in Russia, he entered, when of age, the military service, and fought in the Crimean war. When peace was restored he tendered his resignation and retired to his country seat, where he has since divided his time between literary occupations and the improvement of the condition of his peasants; at his own expense he established a village school, where he is himself the chief teacher, and where he imparts to them the elements of a sound instruction; thus preparing them to become worthy of that liberty of which he is a zealous advocate.

In the present matter of the liberation of the serfs, he has been chosen in his district as "justice of the peace," or mediator between the aristocracy and the people, which task none can better carry out than himself, aristocrat as he is, and at the same time champion of liberty.

Now only in the bloom of early manhood, Count Tolstoi gives us the right to expect much of him, both as a public character and as a writer. We may look forward with much hope to his future career.

THE TRANSLATOR.

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PART I.

THE HISTORY OF MY CHILDHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

THE TUTOR, KARL IWANITSH.

ON the 12th of August, 18..., just three days after my birthday, when I was ten years of age, and when they had given me such wonderful presents, I was awakened at seven o'clock in the morning by Karl Iwanitsh slapping the wall, close to my head, to kill the flies with a fly-flap, made of sugar-paper and a stick. He did this so awkwardly that he hit the image of my guardian angel, hanging on the oaken back of my bed, and the dead fly fell down on my head. I peeped out from under the coverlet, held the still shaking image with my hand, threw the dead fly on the floor, and followed Karl Iwanitsh with sleepy but angry eyes. He, in a many-coloured wadded dressing-gown, fastened round the waist with a wide band of the same material, a red knitted cap, with a tassel, and soft slippers of goat-skin, proceeded onwards along the walls, to aim at, and

to slap the flies. "Granted," thought I, "I am only a small boy, but why disturb me? Why does he not kill the flies around Woloda's bed? Are there not as many there? No; but Woloda is older than I; I am the youngest of all; therefore he torments me. That's what he thinks of all day long—how to annoy me. He knows very well that he awakened and frightened me, but he pretends not to be aware of it; disgusting fellow! and the dressing-gown, the cap, the tassel,—how disgusting!"

While I thus inwardly expressed my anger with Karl Iwanitsh, he went to his bedstead, looked at his watch, which was hanging over it in a little shoe embroidered with beads, hung the fly-flap on a nail, and, evidently in the best disposition of mind possible, turned round to us.

"Get up, children—it is time; your mother is already in the breakfast-room," exclaimed he with a good German accent; then he came to me, sat down at my feet, and took his snuff-box from his pocket. I pretended to be asleep. Karl Iwanitsh began to sneeze, wiped his nose, snapped his fingers, and then commenced amusing himself by annoying me. He began to tickle my toes, and said, smilingly, "Well, well, lazy fellow!"

However much I was afraid of tickling I did not stir in my bed, nor did I answer; I only hid my head still deeper beneath the pillows, gave with all my might a kick with my foot, and did my utmost not to burst out laughing.

"How good he is, and how he loves us; and yet I could think so harshly of him."

I was angry with myself, and with Karl Iwanitsh; I was tempted to laugh and at the same time to cry; my nerves were irritated.

"Let me alone, Karl Iwanitsh," exclaimed I, with tears in my eyes, and raising my head from beneath the bed-clothes.

Karl Iwanitsh was astonished; he left off tickling my foot, and began to question me with much solicitude what was the matter—"perhaps I had dreamt something disagreeable?" His kind German face, the sympathy with which he tried to guess the cause of my tears, made them flow still more copiously; I was conscience-stricken, and could not understand how, a minute ago, I disliked Karl Iwanitsh, and found his dressing-gown, cap and tassel, disgusting; at present, on the contrary, all this seemed extremely loveable, and even the very tassel a proof of his goodness! I said to him, that I cried, in fact, on account of a bad dream that Mama was dead, and they had buried her. This was, of course, my own invention, for I had not the remotest idea of what I had been dreaming that night; but when Karl Iwanitsh, touched by my tale, tried to comfort and quiet me, I imagined by-and-bye that I really had dreamt that terrible dream, and my tears continued to flow, though from quite another cause.

When Karl Iwanitsh left me, and I sat up in bed, and put the stockings on my little feet, the tears by degrees dried, but the gloomy thought of the invented dream never left me. Uncle* Nicola came, a neat

* An old servant who has the care of the children, and is called in a familiar way, "Uncle."

little man, always serious, orderly, and respectful, and a great friend of Karl Iwanitsh. He brought our clothes and shoes; boots for Woloda, and for me still the intolerable shoes with ribbons. Before him I should have felt ashamed to cry whilst the morning sun shone so gaily through the window, and Woloda, standing at the wash-stand and mimicking Maria Iwanowna (the governess of my sister), laughed so heartily and racily, that even the serious Nicola, with the towel over his shoulder, the soap in one hand and the wash-basin in the other, could not help smiling as he said, "Will you allow me to wash you, Wladimir Petrowitsh?" I had completely cheered up.

"Are you almost ready?" was heard, in the voice of Karl Iwanitsh, from the study.

The tone of his voice was severe, and bore no longer the expression of kindness which had touched me so much. In the study Karl Iwanitsh was altogether a different man from what he was at other times; there he was the preceptor. I dressed, washed myself in haste, and, with a brush still in my hand and arranging my wet hair, appeared at his call. Karl Iwanitsh, with spectacles on nose and book in hand, sat in his usual place, between door and window. To the left of the door were two shelves, one the children's (*i. e.* ours), the other, Karl Iwanitsh's own. Upon ours were all sorts of books, lesson-books and play-books; some standing up, some lying down. Only two large volumes, "Histoire des Voyages," in red binding, were placed formally against the wall. There you might see thick and thin, large and small, covers without books, and books

without covers; everything was here crammed together, when, before playtime, we were told to put in order the library, as Karl Iwanitsh called these shelves. The collection of books upon his own particular one, if not so numerous as on ours, was yet more varied. I recollect three of them, a German pamphlet without a cover, on "Manuring the Cabbage in the Kitchen-garden;" the "History of the Seven Years' War," in one volume, bound in parchment and burnt at one corner, and a "Course of Hydrostatics." Karl Iwanitsh passed the greatest part of his time in reading, so much as to injure his sight, yet he never read anything besides these books and the "Northern Bee."

Among the articles on the shelf of Karl Iwanitsh was one I recollect above all the rest. This was a circular piece of card, fastened to a wooden foot by a screw. A picture was glued on the card, representing the caricature of a lady and a wig-maker. Karl Iwanitsh was very clever in glueing pieces of card together, and this was his work, made for the purpose of screening his weak eyes from the light.

I still see before me, as though it were now, that tall figure in the wadded dressing-gown and the red cap, from underneath which some few grey hairs were visible, sitting near the table, whereupon was now placed the screen with the wig-maker shading his face, one hand holding a book, the other leaning on the arm-chair; before him on the table is his watch with a hunter painted on the dial, a checked cotton pocket-handkerchief, a round black snuff-box, and a green spectacle-case. The order and neatness of all these objects

suggested to one the feeling that Karl Iwanitsh had a clear conscience and a quiet heart.

It sometimes happened that, when tired with running about in the saloon below, I stole on tip-toe up stairs to the study, and beheld Karl Iwanitsh sitting alone in his arm-chair, and, with a quiet and solemn expression, reading one of his beloved books. Sometimes I also observed him in certain moments when he was not reading, the spectacles fallen down on his great eagle nose, the blue half-closed eyes looking with a peculiar expression at nothing, and the lips smiling sadly. All was quiet in the room, nothing to be heard save his regular breathing and the ticking of the watch with the hunter on the dial.

He used not to notice me, and I stood at the door and thought, "Poor, poor man! We are many together, we play, we are happy, and he—alone, alone; and nobody to take care of him! He is right in saying that he is an orphan. And the story of his life, how terrible! I recollect how he told it to Nicola—dreadful to be in his position." And I pitied him so much that I went up to him, took his hand, and said, "Dear Karl Iwanitsh!" He was delighted when I spoke to him thus, and it evidently cheered him up.

Some maps, nearly all torn, but carefully glued together by the hand of Karl Iwanitsh, hung on the second wall. On the third wall, in the middle of which was the door, hung on one side two rulers; the one much scratched, which was ours—the other, his own new one. On the opposite side of the door was a black board, on which our great faults were marked by circles

and the lesser by crosses. To the left of the board was the corner in which we had to remain on our knees.

How well I recollect this corner—the screen on the stove, the ventilator on it, and the noise it made when it was turned. Sometimes I had to stay in the corner till back and knees ached dreadfully, and I thought, "Has Karl Iwanitsh forgotten me? he sits quietly in his arm-chair, and reads his 'Hydrostatics'—and I—" at last, in order to remind him of me, I began gently to turn the ventilator round, or to scratch the plaster on the wall; but if by chance too large a piece fell to the floor my fright was worse than any punishment. I glanced at Karl Iwanitsh, who sat quietly, book in hand, pretending not to observe anything.

In the middle of the room stood a table, covered with a torn black oil-cloth, cut here and there with a penknife, and from underneath which, in many places, the edge of the table was visible. Around the table stood some chairs, not painted, but polished by long use. The last wall had three windows in it. This was the view from the first: immediately beneath it a road, on which every slope, each little stone, each rut, was known and dear to me; along the road stretched an alley of lime trees, behind which a twisted fence was visible, and a meadow with the threshing-floor on one side, and a wood, in which the cottage of the keeper might be seen in the distance, on the other. The window on the right looked over a part of the terrace, whereon the grown-up persons of the family used to sit till dinner-time. It sometimes happened that, while Karl Iwanitsh was correcting our exercises, I glanced

towards that window whence the black hair of my mama was visible, some backs of other persons besides, and whence the murmur of conversation and laughter was heard; how angry I was that I could not be there too, and I thought, "When shall I be grown up and have no more lessons, and sit, not alone, with the dialogues in my hand, but with those I love?" My anger then changed into sadness, and I began to think, I know not what or how, but anyhow, so that I did not hear how Karl Iwanitsh scolded me for my mistakes.

Karl Iwanitsh took off his dressing-gown, put on his blue dress-coat with plaits and creases on the shoulders, adjusted his necktie before the looking-glass, and took us downstairs to say good morning to mama.

CHAPTER II.

MAMA.

MAMA sat in the dining-room preparing tea; in one hand she held the tea-pot, with the other she drew the water from the tea-urn, which fell on to the tray. But, although looking most attentively, she observed neither this nor our coming.

However lively may be the recollection of the past, if you attempt to revive in your imagination the features of a beloved being, you see them as through tears, dim and confused. These are the tears of imagination. When I try to remember mama, such as she was at that time, I represent to myself only her brown eyes, expressing continually the utmost kindness and love; a small mole on the neck, rather below where the hair begins; the white embroidered collar; the delicate fresh hand which caressed me so often, and which I so often kissed; but the general appearance vanishes from my mind.

To the left of the couch stood an English piano; at it sat my dark sister Lubotshka, playing, with hands red from a recent washing in cold water, and with evident strain, the "Etudes de Clementi." She was eleven years old, was dressed in a short cotton frock and white trowsers trimmed with lace, and could reach

the octaves only 'arpeggio.' Next to her sat Maria Iwanowna, in a cap with pink ribbons, a blue *kassaweika*, and with a cross red face, which assumed a still more severe expression so soon as Karl Iwanitsh entered the room. She looked angrily at him, and, without answering his salutation, continued, with a due accompaniment of the foot, to count "one, two, three, one, two, three," still more loudly and more imperiously than before.

Karl Iwanitsh, without paying the least attention to this rudeness, went, as usual, with a German address, straight up to kiss mama's hand. She collected herself, shook her head as though to chase away sad thoughts by this movement, gave her hand to Karl Iwanitsh, and kissed him on his wrinkled temple at the same time that he kissed her hand.*

"I thank you, dear Karl Iwanitsh," she said in German; and continuing to speak in the same language, she asked how the children had slept.

Karl Iwanitsh was deaf in one ear, and, from the noise of the piano, heard nothing. He went nearer the couch, when, leaning with one hand on the table, and standing on one leg, he lifted the cap off his head, and with a smile, which at that time seemed to me the summit of politeness, said, "You will excuse me, Natalia Nicolaewna?"

Karl Iwanitsh, that he might not catch cold, never took off his red cap, but every time he entered the drawing-room asked for permission to keep it on. "Put it on, Karl Iwanitsh; but I asked you whether the

* The Russian fashion of welcome.

children slept well?" said mama, turning to him and speaking rather loudly. Still he did not hear, covering his bald head with the red cap, and smiling still more.

"Stop a minute, Mimi," said mama, now smiling also, to Maria Iwanowna, "it is impossible to hear."

When mama smiled how beautiful her face was! It made her infinitely more handsome, and everything around seemed to look cheerful. If in the heavy moments of life I could but behold that smile, I should never know what grief is. It appears to me that in smiling only consists what we call the beauty of a face; if a smile heighten its charms the face is beautiful; if a smile do not change, it is but a common one, and if it spoil, then is it decidedly ugly.

Mama took my head in both her hands, bent it backward, looked seriously at me, and said, "You have been crying to-day."

I did not answer. She kissed my eyes, and said in German, "Why did you cry?"

When she talked with us in her kindest manner it was always in this language, which she knew perfectly.

"I cried about a dream, mama," said I, remembering, with every detail, the invented dream, and trembling involuntarily at the thought.

Karl Iwanitsh confirmed my words, but was silent as to the subject of the dream. After a long conversation upon the weather, in which also Mimi took a part, mama put some pieces of sugar on the tray for some particularly respected servants, then rose and went to her embroidery-frame, which stood close to the window.

"Go to papa, children, and ask him to come to me before he goes out to the barns.

Music, counting, and angry looks resumed their activity, and we went to see papa. Passing through the room which even from grandpapa's time had the name of the office, we entered the cabinet.

CHAPTER III.

PAPA.

HE stood near his writing-table in a passion and, pointing to some envelopes, papers, and heaps of money, spoke with warmth to the bailiff, Jacob Michailowitsh, who, standing at his place, between the door and the barometer, his hand behind his back, moved his fingers rapidly in various directions.

The more papa grew angry the more rapidly the fingers moved, and as soon as papa was silent they stopped; but when Jacob himself began to talk, the fingers went with the utmost rapidity and flew desperately in various directions. By these movements I thought the secret idea of Jacob could be guessed; his face was always placid, expressing at the same time the consciousness of his dignity and submission, so much as to say, "I am right, but after all as you like." Seeing us, papa said only, "Wait—directly." And he looked towards the door for some one to shut it.

"Gracious heaven! what's the matter with you to-day, Jacob?" continued he, shrugging his shoulders (as was his habit) and addressing the bailiff; "this envelope with the enclosure of 800 roubles"—Jacob took the counting-board, numbered 800, and fixing his eyes on the particular spot, waited for what should come next...

"for the expenses during my absence. Do you understand, from the mill you ought to receive 1000 roubles —is it so or not? From the mortgage on the treasury you should get about 8000 roubles; from the hay—of which, according to your calculation, there will be sold 7000 poods,* at 45 kopecks a load—you must receive 3000; consequently the whole of the sum you will have is, how much? Twelve.thousand? Right or not?"

"Just so," said Jacob.

But by the extraordinary rapidity with which the fingers moved, I perceived that he wished to object; papa interrupted him.

"Well, of this money you will send 10,000 to the committee for Petowskoe. Now the money which is in the office," continued papa, (Jacob threw aside the former 12,000 and counted 21,000,) "you bring it to me, and under the present date you will enter it as spent." Jacob mixed the balls on the counting-board, and turning them over intended, probably, to show that the money, the 12,000, had been turned over in this way. "This envelope, with the money, you will deliver from me to the address."

I stood close to the table and looked on the address: it was the following—"To Karl Iwanitsh Mayer."

Perhaps papa saw that I read something which I ought not, for he touched my shoulder with his hand, and by a slight movement made me understand I must go away from the table. I knew not whether this was meant for a caress or a command, but at any rate

* One pood is 40 Russian pounds.

I kissed the large hand with swollen veins, which lay upon my shoulder.

"I hear," said Jacob. "And what directions have you for the accounts of the money from Chabarowska?"

Chabarowska was mama's village.

"They are to remain in the office, from which they must not be taken without my orders."

For some minutes Jacob was silent; suddenly his fingers began to move with the most extraordinary velocity, and changing the expression of submissive stupidity with which he had listened to the authoritative orders into that of his own sly cleverness, he took the counting-board and began to speak.

"Will you allow me to tell you, Peter Aleksandritsh, that, however it may please you, it is impossible at present to reimburse the committee. You deigned to say," continued he with pauses, "that money must come from the mortgage, the mill, and the hay." (While enumerating these things he again numbered them on the board.) "I am afraid lest we should be mistaken in the accounts," added he, stopping a little longer and looking gravely at papa.

"How so?"

"Will you be good enough to look. There is the account for the mill; the miller has been twice to me to ask for time, and I am afraid he has no money at all —and he is even now here, would you not like to speak to him yourself?"

"What does he say?" asked papa, shewing by a sign of the head that he would rather not speak with the miller.

"What? oh! that's easy to guess; he says that there's absolutely no grinding going on now, and that the little money which was left is all gone for the dike. Well, and suppose we had him turned out, my lord, should we find our account in it? With regard to what you were pleased to say about the mortgage, I think I shewed you once before that our money is placed there, and we cannot get it back immediately. I sent to town to-day, to Iwan Afanapitch, a load of flour, and a letter on this matter; he was pleased to answer that we should be heartily glad to oblige Peter Aleksandritch, but the affair was not in his hands, and that it was evident from all circumstances that you could not receive your money in less than two months. From the hay, you were pleased to suppose that we should get 3,000 roubles." He counted on the board 3,000, and after a minute's pause, looking now on the board, now in papa's eyes, with a most peculiar expression, he continued, "You see yourself how little that is! Yes, and even in this we shall lose if we sell it now; you yourself please to know—"

It was evident that he still had a stock of other arguments; perhaps that was why papa interrupted him.

"I make no change in my arrangements," said he, "but if there should really be a delay in the payment of this money, it would, of course, become necessary to take as much as is wanted from the Chabarowska money."

"Very well, sir." The expression of Jacob's face and the movements of his fingers shewed clearly that the last order gave him the greatest satisfaction.

Jacob was a serf, a zealous devoted man; he was, like every good bailiff, exacting and parsimonious to the utmost in the interests of his lord, about which he had very strange notions of his own. He endeavoured continually to increase the property of his master at the expense of that of his mistress, trying to prove that it would be impossible to avoid using the rents of her property for the benefit of Petrowska (the village where we lived). He was now delighted, because he had completely succeeded.

Then, welcoming us, papa said, that "by staying any longer in the village we should become lazy fellows, that we were now beginning to be big boys, and that we ought to begin learning in earnest."

"You know, I think, that I start to-night for Moscow, and am going to take you with me," said he. "You will live with grandmama, but mama and the girls will remain here. And you know that her only consolation will be to hear that you learn well, and that you satisfy those around you."

We had expected something unusual to take place, from the preparations which had been going on for several days; this news, however, struck us terribly. Woloda coloured up, and, with a trembling voice, delivered mama's message.

"This, then, it was that my dream foreboded," thought I; "may God grant that it be nothing worse."

I was very sorry on account of mama; nevertheless, the idea that we soon should be grown up rejoiced me.

"If we go to-day, probably we shall have no lessons —that is delightful," thought I. "However, I pity

Karl Iwanitsh. He will certainly be dismissed, or the envelope would not have been prepared for him; it would be better to stay always here, and learn, so as not to part with mama or distress poor Karl Iwanitsh. He is miserable enough already."

All these thoughts crossed my mind; I did not stir from my place, but looked sadly on the black ribands of my shoes. After saying a few words to Karl Iwanitsh about the depression of the barometer, and ordering Jacob not to feed the sporting dogs, because after dinner there would be a farewell visit to them, papa, contrary to my expectations, sent us to lessons, consoling us, however, by promising to take us out hunting.

On my way upstairs I made an excursion on to the terrace. Near the door there lay, in the sun, with twinkling eyes, papa's favourite greyhound, Milka.

"Miloshka,*" said I, caressing him, and kissing him on the muzzle, "we are going away to-day; good bye! We shall not see one another any more." I was pleased, and yet I cried.

* Diminutive of tenderness.

CHAPTER IV.

CLASSES.

KARL Iwanitsh was out of humour. This was evident from his contracted eyebrows, from the way in which he flung his coat into the drawer, angrily girded himself up again in his old dressing-gown, and marked strongly with his nails the place in the book of dialogues to which we had to learn by heart. Woloda learned properly; I was so distracted that I did nothing. For a long while I looked vacantly in the book, but the tears, which rushed to my eyes, from thinking of the impending separation, prevented my reading a single word. When the time had come to repeat the dialogues to Karl Iwanitsh, who listened to me with winking eyes (a very bad sign), just at the place where some one asks, *Wo kommen Sie her?* (from where do you come?) and another answers, *Ich komme vom Kaffeehaus* (I come from the coffeehouse), I could no longer restrain my tears, and, from sobbing, could not pronounce *Haben Sie die Zeitung nicht gelesen?* (have you not read the newspaper?) And when we came to our writing lesson, the tears falling from my eyes on the paper made a terrible mess, as though some one had been writing with water on blotting-paper. Karl Iwanitsh was very angry, ordered me on my knees, assured me that this was

obstinacy and a puppet-comedy (this was his favourite expression), threatened me with the ruler, and wanted me to ask pardon, but for sobbing and tears I was unable to utter a syllable; at last, perhaps feeling his injustice, he went into the room of Nicola, slamming the door after him.

The conversation in the room of 'uncle' could be overheard in the study.

"Did you hear, Nicola, that the children are going to Moscow?" said Karl Iwanitsh.

"How could I help it?"

Probably Nicola wanted to get up, because Karl Iwanitsh said, "Sit down, Nicola," and then locked the door. I came from the corner and went to the door to listen.

"However much you may do for people, however much you may be attached to them, never expect any gratitude, Nicola," said Karl Iwanitsh with much warmth. Nicola, sitting near the window and occupied with shoemaking, affirmatively nodded his head.

"I have lived twelve years in this house, and I may say before God, Nicola," continued Karl Iwanitsh, lifting his eyes and his snuff-box towards the ceiling, "that I have loved them, and have occupied myself with them more than if they had been my own children. You recollect, Nicola, when Woloda had the fever; you recollect I then did not close my eyes for nine days and nights, sitting near his bed. Oh! at that time I was the good, dear Karl Iwanitsh; I was wanted then; but now," added he, smiling ironically, "now the children have grown up, and must learn in earnest. Perhaps they did not learn here, Nicola?"

"I should think they did," said Nicola, laying down his awl, and stretching the thread with both his hands.

"Ah! but now I am no longer necessary, and am driven away. Where are the promises? where is the gratitude? I esteem and love Natalia Nicolaewna, Nicola," said he, laying his hand on his heart, "but what is *she* here? Her will is completely powerless in this house, that's the thing;" thus saying he flung, with an energetic gesture, a strip of leather on the floor; "but I know whose tricks these are, and why I am no longer wanted; it's because I do not flatter and indulge in everything like certain people. I am in the habit of speaking the truth in all places and to all persons," continued he with pride. "God be with them! By my leaving them they will not be much enriched; and I, with God's help, shall get a crust of bread somewhere—shan't I, Nicola?"

Nicola lifted his head and looked at Karl Iwanitsh, as if to ascertain whether he would, in fact, be likely to get a crust of bread, but he said nothing.

Karl Iwanitsh continued for a long while to speak much in the same strain; he said how much more his services had been appreciated at a certain general's where he formerly lived (I was very sorry to hear that); he spoke about Saxony, his parents, his friend, the tailor, Schönheit, (beauty) &c., &c.

I sympathised with his grief, and I was deeply sorry that papa and Karl Iwanitsh, both of whom I loved almost equally, did not understand each other; I returned to my corner, sat down on my heels, and pondered how an understanding between them could be managed.

Returning to the study, Karl Iwanitsh ordered me to get up and prepare the copybook to write from dictation. When everything was ready he sat down with dignity in his arm-chair, and in a voice that seemed to come from some unknown depth, he began to dictate the following: "*Von al-len Lei-den-shaf-ten die grau-samste ist;* have you written that?" He paused, took a pinch of snuff, and began with fresh force: "*die grausamste ist die Un-dauk-bar-keit**—a capital *U.*"

Waiting for the continuation I wrote the last word, and looked at him.

"*Punctum,*" (stop) said he, with a hardly perceptible smile, and made a sign for us to give him the copybooks.

He read over several times with different intonations, and with the expression of the greatest satisfaction, this sentence, which expressed his predominant thought; then he set us to learn a lesson of history, and placed himself near the window. His face was not so grieved as before, but on the contrary expressed the satisfaction of a man who has avenged himself in a dignified way for an injury received.

It was a quarter to one o'clock, but Karl Iwanitsh did not even think of releasing us; he again gave us a new lesson to learn. Fatigue and hunger increased equally. I followed with the greatest impatience every sign betraying the approach of dinner. There went the housemaid with a cloth to wipe the plates, then the noise of crockery was heard in the buffet, the table was

* The most cruel of all passions is ingratitude.

removed, and the chairs put round; Mimi with Lubotshka and Katenka (Katenka was the daughter of Mimi, twelve years old) came from the garden, but I did not see Foka, the servant, who used to come and announce the dinner. Then the books were thrown aside, and, without paying attention to Karl Iwanitsh, I ran down. Steps were at last heard on the staircase, but they were not Foka's. I had studied his steps and knew the creaking of his boots. The door opened, and a figure, entirely unknown to me, made its appearance.

CHAPTER V.

THE IDIOT.

A MAN entered the room, about fifty years old, with a pale attenuated face, marked by the small-pox, long grey hair, and a scanty reddish beard. He was so tall that, on coming through the doorway, he had not only to incline his head, but to stoop his whole body. He wore a sort of kaftan, rather torn, and held a magnificent staff in his hand. As he entered he knocked it with all his strength upon the floor, and contracting his brows, and opening his mouth very wide, he laughed in a terrible and unnatural way. He had lost the sight of one eye, and the white pupil of that one moved continually, and gave to his already ugly face a still more disgusting expression.

"Halloh! caught!" exclaimed he, running with short steps up to Woloda, when he took hold of his head and began to look carefully at the crown of it; then, with a perfectly serious expression, he left him, went to the table, began to blow under the oil-cloth, and to make the sign of the cross over it. "Oh! oh! what a pity! Oh! oh! how sad! sweet heart! flies away," said he with a voice almost suffocated with weeping, looking with deep feeling at Woloda, and

beginning to wipe away the literally streaming tears with his sleeve.

His voice was rough and hoarse, his movements hasty and nervous, his words without sense and connection (he never used pronouns), but the sound of the voice was so melancholy, and his yellow deformed face assumed sometimes so sincere and sorrowful an expression, that, listening to him, it was impossible to repress a mingled feeling of pity, fear, and grief.

This was the idiot, Grisha.

Where did he come from? Who were his parents? What induced him to choose the strange life that he led? Nobody could tell. I learned only, that from his fifteenth year he had been known as an idiot who, winter and summer, went barefoot, visited the convents, gave little images to all who liked them, and spoke obscure words, which some people took for predictions; that nobody remembered him otherwise; that he at rare intervals used to go to my grandmother, and that he was said by some people to be the unhappy son of rich parents, and a pure saintly soul; and by others, to be a simple peasant and a mere idler.

At last came the long-wished-for and punctual Foka, and we went down. Grisha followed us, sobbing and continuing to talk a variety of nonsense, and to knock with his staff on the steps of the staircase. Papa and mama were walking up and down the room, holding each other's hands, and speaking in a low voice. Maria Iwanowna sat stiffly on one of the arm-chairs, symmetrically in a right angle with the sofa, and with a stern, somewhat suppressed voice, giving a lesson

to the two girls sitting near her. As soon as Karl Iwanitsh entered the room she looked at him, but turned away directly with an expression which seemed to say, "I do not observe you, Karl Iwanitsh." It was easy to see by the eyes of the girls that they had important news to give us as soon as opportunity offered —but to leave their seats and come to us, would have been to infringe the laws of Mimi. We must first go to her and say, "Bonjour, Mimi," bow, scrape a leg— and then only were we permitted to enter into conversation.

What an intolerable creature was this Mimi! In her presence it was almost impossible to say a word because she found fault with everything. Besides, she exhorted us continually, "Parlez donc français," when we wanted to speak Russian, just as if she wished to vex us; or at dinner, when there was some nice dish we wished to enjoy undisturbed, quickly she ejaculated, "Mangez donc avec du pain," or, "Comment est ce que vous tenez votre fourchette?" "What business has *she* with us?" thought I. "Let her teach the girls; we have our Karl Iwanitsh!" I completely shared his hatred of "*certain people.*"

"Ask mama to take us out hunting too," whispered Katenka, taking hold of my jacket to stop me when the elder persons went to the dining-room.

"Very well, we will try."

Grisha likewise sat in the dining-room, but at a separate little table. He never lifted his eyes from the plate, but sighed sometimes, and made horrible grimaces, and said, as if to himself, "What a pity.... flies

away.....the dove flies to heaven.....Oh! oh!..... the stone on the grave.....and so on."

Mama had been absent in mind ever since the morning; the presence of Grisha, his words and manners, seemed greatly to strengthen this disposition. "By-the-bye, I forgot to ask you a trifle," said she, while giving papa a plate of soup.

"What?"

"Will you not order your terrible dogs to be tied up? They nearly bit poor Grisha when he entered the court-yard, and, I am sure, they will some day bite the children."

When Grisha heard that he was spoken of, he turned to the table, shewed his torn clothes, and, while eating his dinner, said: "Would have them tear me to pieces —God would not allow it,—a sin to let the dogs loose.....a great sin—don't beat, Lord—why beat?—God forgives—these times are gone by."

"What does he say?" asked papa, looking seriously and severely at him, "I don't understand him at all."

"But I understand," observed mama; "he told me that some hunter intentionally set the dogs on him, therefore he says, 'He would have them tear me to pieces, but God would not allow it,' and he asks you not to punish the man for it."

"Oh, that's it!" said papa. "How does he know that I intend to punish the hunter? You know I am not a great friend to this set of people," continued he, in French, "but this one in particular annoys me greatly, and should it happen"—

"Oh, don't say so," said mama, interrupting him,

as if frightened by some thought. "How do you know?"

"I think I have ample opportunity for knowing this kind of creatures; plenty of them come to see you—all of the same sort; probably it is always the same story."

It was evident that mama was quite of a different opinion on this subject, but would not quarrel about it.

"Hand me the cakes, please!" said she. "Are they good to-day or not?"

"No, I am angry," continued papa, taking the cakes, but placing them at such a distance that mama could not reach them; "yes, very angry, when I see that reasonable and educated people allow themselves to be so deceived." And he struck the table with his fork.

"I asked you to give me the cakes," repeated she, tendering her hand.

"And it is very well," continued papa, averting her hand, "that the police takes hold of such vagabonds. They are good for nothing but to destroy still more the already weak nerves of some persons," added he, with a smile, observing that mama did not like this conversation at all, and he gave her the cakes.

"I shall make only one reply to all this; it is difficult to believe that a man, who, although sixty years of age, goes barefoot in winter and summer, never ceases to wear chains of two pounds weight, and never takes advantage of the proposals made to him for a tranquil and comfortable life,—it is difficult to believe that such a man should do all that from laziness." Pausing a

little she added, with a sigh, "As to predictions, I am paid for believing in them; I told you, I think, how exactly Grisha prophesied the very day and hour of poor papa's death."

"Oh, what have you done to me?" said papa, smiling, and putting his hand to the side of his mouth (when he did this I used to listen with particular attention, expecting something comical). "Why do you put me in mind of his feet? I looked at them, and I can eat no more."

Dinner was over, Lubotshka and Katenka kept on winking at us, fidgetting in their chairs, and shewing the utmost restlessness. This winking signified, "Why don't you ask whether we too may go to the hunt?" I nudged Woloda, Woloda nudged me, and at last took a resolution, beginning shyly, then becoming reassured and declaring that, as we were to go to-day, it would not be out of place, perhaps, that the girls also should enjoy the chase. After a consultation among the grown-up people, the wish was granted, and, to make it perfect, mama said that she too would come with us.

CHAPTER VI.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CHASE.

DURING dessert Jacob was called, and orders were given for the carriage, the dogs, and the riding horses, all with the greatest minuteness, designating each horse by its own particular name. Woloda's horse being lame, papa ordered the hunter to be saddled for him. This word, the 'hunter,' sounded dreadful to the ears of mama; she imagined it to be something in the shape of a wild animal which would run away directly with Woloda and be the death of him. Notwithstanding the assurances of papa and Woloda, who with extraordinary dexterity affirmed that this was nothing, and that he liked it very much when the horse carried him fast, poor mama continued to affirm that the whole pleasure would be spoiled for her.

Dinner was over, the old people took their coffee in the study, and we ran into the garden, along the uneven paths that were strewed with yellow leaves, all chattering the while. The talk was of Woloda's riding the hunter; what a shame it was that Lubotshka could not run so fast as Katenka; how interesting it would be to see the chains of Grisha, and so on; only the impending separation was never mentioned. Our conversation was interrupted by the noise of the carriage,

on each spring of which sat a little village urchin. Behind the carriage followed the huntsmen with the dogs, then the coachman Ignat, on the horse intended for Woloda, leading also my old horse. At first we all rushed to the fence, from which these interesting objects could be seen, but then, whistling and calling, we ran upstairs to dress, in such a way that we might be as like as possible to the huntsmen. One of the most obvious ways of doing this was to put the trowsers inside the boots. We set to work without further delay to this business, and hastened it as much as possible that we might run out again on the stairs, and satisfy ourselves with the sight of dogs and horses, and the chatter about the huntsmen. The day was warm. From the morning, white fantastical forms of clouds had appeared on the horizon, a light wind drove them nearer and nearer together, and sometimes they quite obscured the sun. But however close and black they became, it was evident they did not think it right to gather into a thunderstorm and to spoil our last pleasure. Towards evening some cleared away, grew pale and narrow, and retired to the horizon; others straight overhead changed themselves to a semblance of white transparent fish scales. One black cloud alone stood fixedly in the east. Karl Iwanitsh always knew whither the clouds went; he declared that this cloud was over Maslowka, that we should have no rain, and that the weather would remain fair.

Foka, notwithstanding his advanced years, came with a run to the staircase, to call "drive up," and with legs wide apart stood firmly in the middle of the

carriage-drive, between the spot for which the coachman had to make and the threshold, in the attitude of a man who does not want to be reminded of his duties. The ladies came, and, after some consultation on the division of the seats, and how to place the girls safely, (which seemed to me to be quite superflous,) they settled themselves, opened their parasols, and started. As the carriage drove away, mama, pointing to the hunter, asked with a trembling voice, "Is this the horse for Wladimir Petrowitch?" And when the coachman answered in the affirmative, she made a significant movement with her hand and turned away. I was in a state of the greatest impatience. Jumping on my horse, I could just see between its ears, and I proceeded to perform different evolutions in the court.

"Pray don't ride over the dogs," said one of the huntsmen.

"Be quiet; it is not the first time that I have been of the party," said I, proudly.

Woloda sat on the hunter, but notwithstanding the boldness of his character, he was not without some apprehension, and, while caressing it, asked repeatedly, "Is he quiet?"

He looked very well on horseback, almost a young man, and sat so well on the saddle that I envied him, particularly because, as far as I could judge by the shadow, I did not look half so well.

Now papa's steps were heard on the staircase; the dog-feeder summoned the scattered dogs, the huntsmen with the greyhounds called theirs and mounted their horses. The groom led the horse to the staircase. The

dogs of papa's leash, which before lay around in different picturesque attitudes, sprang up to him. Behind him, in a collar embroidered with beads, Milka ran joyously to welcome and play with the other dogs. Papa mounted, and away we went.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CHASE.

FIRST of all rode Turka, on his blueish hog-backed horse, in a shaggy cap, with a magnificent horn slung round his shoulders, and a knife at his belt. To judge from the gloomy and cruel expression of this man, one would rather have thought he was going to some bloody strife with man than to a hunt. Around the hind legs of his horse ran the hounds, moving like checkered undulating balls. It was pitiful to see the fate which befell the unhappy one who wanted to remain behind. It had first, with the greatest difficulty, to persuade its companion to stop, and then having accomplished this, one of the dog-feeders directly turned round, and applying his whip, cried "To the pack!" When we came out of the gate, papa ordered the huntsmen to continue on the road with us, while he rode into the cornfields.

The harvest was just at its height. The large yellow shining field was bounded on one side only by a high blue-looking forest, which seemed to me like a far-distant mysterious place, behind which the world ended, or the uninhabited desert began. The whole field was covered with sheaves and reapers. Between the high thick corn on the rows already cut down, were to be seen the backs of women stooping, and armfuls of

corn moving about, as they lifted them to put them in piles; a little on one side, in the shade, was a woman bending over a cradle; and the stubble-field was everywhere dotted with sheaves and corn-flowers. On the other side, men in their shirt-sleeves stood on the telegas,* setting up the sheaves after having shaken the dust off them. The 'starost',† in boots, and only just a tunic flung over him, and with a scoring stick in his hand, saw papa at a distance, lifted his lambswool cap, wiped his reddish head and beard with his pocket-handkerchief, and told the women to stand up. The chesnut horse upon which papa rode, went with a sprightly step, tossed his head, and brushed away with his fine tail the gadflies and insects innumerable that unmercifully teased his sides. The two greyhounds, continually curving their tails like a sickle, hopped gracefully over the high stubble; Milka was the first, and shaking his head, awaited the whipper-in. The chatting of the people, the noise of horses and waggons, the joyous cry of the quails, the humming of the insects poised steadily in the air, the smell of the fields, the corn, and the steaming of the horses, a thousand different lights and shadows produced by the scorching sun on the light yellow-field; the blueish distant wood and the lilac-white clouds, the white cobwebs floating through the air and covering the field,—all this was seen, heard, and felt by me.

When we arrived at the wood of Kalinowo, we found the carriage there, and besides, quite unexpect-

* The name of a kind of small Russian carriage.

† The bailiff in the Russian commune.

edly, another telega with one horse, in the middle of which sat the butler. From beneath the straw a tea-urn was visible, a tub with apparatus for ice-cream, and different attractive bundles and boxes. It was impossible to mistake this; it signified tea, fruit, and ices in the open air. At the sight of this telega we manifested an uproarious delight, because, drinking tea in the wood, on the grass, and moreover on a spot where no one had ever yet drunk tea—seemed to us an inexpressible pleasure.

Turka rode to the little meadow where we halted, listened attentively to papa's detailed instructions how to divide and where to go for us, (although he never acted according to these instructions, but always followed his own opinion), untied the dogs, fastened the leash to his saddle without dismounting, and, whistling, vanished behind the young birch-trees. The liberated hounds, with great satisfaction, jumped and wagged their tails, then, shaking and preparing themselves by a short trot, sundry sniffings and antics, they scampered away in different directions.

"Have you a pocket-handkerchief?" asked papa.

I took one from my pocket, and shewed it to him.

"Well! Fasten this greyhound with it."

"Gizana?" asked I, with the air of a connoisseur.

"Yes, and run with him along the road. When you come to a little meadow in the wood, stop and look about, and don't come back to me without a hare."

I tied my handkerchief round the soft neck of Gizana, and began to run headlong towards the appointed spot. Papa laughed, and cried—

"Faster, faster, or you'll be too late."

Gizana halted continually, pricked up his ears, and listened to the halloo of the sportsmen. My strength was not sufficient to get him from one place, and I began to scream, "Go on! Go on!" Then Gizana took to running with such rapidity that I could not keep him back, and more than once tumbled down, until we reached the ground described. Selecting a shady and level place near the roots of a high oak, I lay down on the turf, made Gizana sit by my side, and waited. My imagination, as usual, went far in advance of reality. I fancied that I was chasing the third hare when the first hound was heard barking. The voice of Turka resounded in louder and more animated tones through the wood; the baying of a hound was heard nearer and nearer; with that joined another deep note, then a third, a fourth; then they were silent, then again their voices rose. The sounds increased in strength, and continued uninterruptedly until they mingled in one loud tumult. "The wood had become a voice, and the hounds burned with fire."*

Hearing this I nearly swooned on the spot with excitement. I smiled involuntarily; the perspiration flowed from me in streams; the drops fell on my chin and tickled me, I did not wipe them away. I felt as though these were decisive moments! But this state of tension was too unnatural to continue long. The hounds dispersed all along the edge of the wood,—they went away from me—and hares—there were none. I began to

* Russian proverb.

look around. With Gizana it was the same thing; at first he pulled his leash and whined, then he lay down near me, put his muzzle on my knees, and resigned himself. All through the naked roots of the oak, under which I sat upon the grey dry earth, among withered oak-leaves and acorns, dried up brushwood, yellow-green moss, and slender, scantily-interspersed green grass-blades, there swarmed innumerable ants. One after another they hurried forward on the even path they had made themselves—some with burdens, others without. I took a little branch and barred their way. Now it was curious to see how they despised the obstacle, some passing it by creeping underneath, some by climbing over; but others, particularly those with burdens, were entirely at a loss what to do; they halted, searched for an outlet, or returned, or else walking up the brushwood reached my hand, and intended to get into the sleeves of my jacket. My attention was drawn away from these interesting observations by a butterfly with yellow wings, which, alluring in the highest degree, flitted before me. So soon as I began to observe it it flew away, circled over some half-faded blossoms of white clover, and settled on one. I don't know whether the sun's warmth delighted it, or whether it sucked the juice of a flower, but it seemed to feel thoroughly at ease. Hardly did it move its wings, and pressing close down seemed to die away. I held my head with both my hands and looked at it with intense interest.

Suddenly Gizana got up and pulled me with such power that he nearly dragged me over. I looked round.

At the edge of the wood a hare presented itself, bending down one ear and pricking up the other. The blood mounted to my head, and I at this moment forgot everything. I screamed violently, let the dog loose, and was about to turn towards the spot, but at the same moment I had to repent it; the hare stooped, jumped up, and I saw it no more.

What was my confusion when, following the hounds, which at once rushed out from the border, Turka stepped forth from the bushes. He saw my mistake (which consisted in not biding my time), and looking contemptuously at me he said only, "Ah, master!" But one ought to have heard the tone in which this was said! I should have felt relieved had he suspended me from his saddle like a hare.

I stood for a long while in deep despair, on the same spot, without calling the dog, and repeated only whilst tapping my sides, "Good heavens, how stupid I have been!"

I heard the hounds run further away, then barking on the other side of the wood, pursuing the hare, and Turka with his magnificent horn summoning them—but for all this I did not stir.

CHAPTER VIII.

GAMES.

THE hunt was at an end. A cloth had been spread in the shade of some young birch-trees, and around it sat the whole party. The butler, Gabriel, stamped down the surrounding grass, wiped the plates, and unpacked from a basket plums and peaches enveloped in leaves. Through the green branches of the young birch-trees the sun glittered and projected little running balls of light on the pattern of the napkin, on my legs, and even on the moist, bald head of Gabriel. The soft breeze played in the leaves of the trees, and breathing on my hair and my hot face refreshed me exceedingly.

When we had done with fruit and ices we had no longer any employment round the empty cloth, and notwithstanding the oblique scorching rays of the sun we rose and proceeded to play.

"Well! what shall it be?" asked Lubotshka, blinking in the sun and jumping on the grass. "Let us play Robinson."

"No—that's tiresome," said Woloda, lazily stretching himself on the grass and gnawing the leaves. "Always Robinson! if you want to play at something we had better build a summer-house."

Woloda gave himself great airs! Probably he was

proud of having been on the hunter, and he pretended to be very tired. Perhaps also he had already too much sense and too little imagination fully to enjoy the game of Robinson. This game consisted in the performance of several scenes from the "Swiss Family Robinson," which we had not long ago read.

"Well, be a good boy—why should you not do so to please us now?" said the girls to him. "You may be Charles, or Ernest, or the father, which you like," added Katenka, trying to raise him from the ground by pulling his sleeves.

"No, I will not, it is tiresome!" said Woloda, resisting, and yet smiling as if pleased.

"It would be better to sit at home than not play at anything," murmured Lubotshka, with tears in her eyes. She was a great whiner.

"Well, go on! only do not cry, I cannot bear it."

Woloda's condescension gave us little satisfaction; on the contrary his lazy and tired expression destroyed the fun of the game. When we sat on the ground, and imagined that we were sitting in a boat and fishing or rowing with all our might, Woloda sat with folded hands and in a position which had nothing in common with that of a fisherman. I made a remark on this, but he answered that by our moving our hands more or less we should neither gain nor lose, and not advance a bit. I involuntarily agreed with him. When I pretended to go out hunting with a stick on my shoulder and went to the wood, Woloda lay on his back with hands under his head, and said to me that it was all the same whether he went or not. Such behaviour and

words, cooling our ardour for the game, were exceedingly disagreeable, the more so as it was impossible not to acknowledge to oneself that Woloda acted very wisely. I knew very well that it was not only impossible to kill birds with a stick, but to shoot with it at all. Still, just *this* was the play! If we once began to reason thus, then it was likewise impossible to drive on chairs; and I think Woloda himself must recollect how, on long winter evenings, we used to cover an arm-chair with a shawl and make a carriage of it, one of us being the coachman, another the footman, the girls sitting in it, three chairs being the 'Troika' of horses, and then how we pretended to set out. And what strange occurrences we used to meet with on our way! And how gaily and quickly those long winter evenings passed away! If we were always to judge from reality, those games would be nonsense; but if play were nonsense, what would be left?

CHAPTER IX.

SOMETHING IN THE WAY OF A FIRST LOVE.

PRETENDING to pluck some American fruit from a tree, Lubotshka tore away a leaf with a caterpillar of enormous size upon it, threw it with horror to the ground, lifted her hands, and sprang aside, as though afraid that she would be splashed by it. The game was interrupted; all of us, with our heads close together, stooped towards the ground to look at the curiosity.

I peeped over the shoulder of Katenka, who tried to lift the caterpillar by means of another leaf which she put in its way.

I had observed that many girls are in the habit of moving their shoulders, trying by this means to put the loose garments in the right place on the bare neck. I remember that Mimi used to become angry at this manœuvre, and to say, it is a chambermaid's trick. Bending over the worm, Katenka now made this very movement, and, at the same instant, the wind lifted the handkerchief from her white neck. Her shoulder was just then close to my lips. I looked at it and kissed it. She did not turn round, and Woloda, without raising his head, said contemptuously, "What tenderness!"

I felt the tears rushing to my eyes.

I could not turn my looks from Katenka. I had

long been accustomed to her fresh, fair face, and had always loved her; but now I looked at her with increased attention and loved her still more dearly.

When we returned to the old people, papa declared, to our greatest joy, that at mama's entreaties, our departure was delayed till the following morning.

We returned home with the carriage. Woloda and I galloped near it, vying with each other in the exhibition of our horsemanship and boldness. My shadow was longer than before, and, judging from that, I seemed to have grown into a fine rider, but the feeling of self-satisfaction which I experienced was soon alloyed by the following circumstance: Desirous of beating Woloda in the face of all those sitting in the carriage, I remained a little behind; then, by means of whip and spur, I sent my horse forward, and assumed a natural, graceful pose, with the intention of passing them rapidly on the side where Katenka was seated. I was doubtful only whether it would be better to be silent or to shout. But the plaguy horse coming up abreast of the carriage-horses, in spite of all my efforts, halted so unexpectedly, that I was pitched forward from the saddle on to its neck, and so I cut a very poor figure.

CHAPTER X.

THE SORT OF MAN MY FATHER WAS.

HE was a man of the last century, and had the chivalrous character, the self-reliance and gallantry common to the youth of that time. On the men of the present day he looked down with a sort of contempt, arising partly from innate pride, partly from a secret annoyance that, in our age, he could no longer have that influence and those successes which he had had in his own. His two principal passions were gambling and intrigue; he had won and lost, in the course of his life, several millions.

A tall stately figure, strange short steps in his gait, a habit of shrugging the shoulders, small eyes which had a perpetual smile in them, a large eagle nose, irregular lips somewhat awkwardly, yet agreeably, closed, a defect in the articulation with a consequent lisping, and a perfectly bald head—such was my father from the time that I first remember him. This was the exterior with which he not only had success and was a man *à bonnes fortunes*, but which pleased every one without exception, people of all ranks and positions, and particularly those whom he wished to please.

He understood how to take the lead under every circumstance. By no means a man of the *highest society*

himself, he constantly lived with people of those circles and knew how to make himself esteemed by them. He possessed in the highest degree that pride and self-confidence which, without offending others, kept him up in the opinion of the world. He had a good deal of originality, and made use of it in such a way that it was as good as worldly position, or fortune. Nothing in the world could astonish him, and although not in a brilliant position, he yet seemed born to be so. He understood so perfectly how to conceal from others and to remove from himself the dark side of life, which is filled with little vicissitudes and vexations, that it was impossible not to envy him. He was a connoisseur in all those objects which afford ease and pleasure, and knew how to employ them. He piqued himself on the brilliant connexions which he entered into, partly by means of my mother's family, partly by means of the comrades of his youth, and he was secretly annoyed with those who had attained a higher rank than himself, while he always remained in that of a retired lieutenant of guards. He, like all *ci-devant* officers, did not know how to dress according to the existing fashion, but he dressed originally and artistically. He always wore ample and light garments, beautiful shirts, a large collar and ruffles turned over; everything became his stately figure and his quiet self-confident expression. He was full of feeling, even to sentimentality. Often, when he read aloud, on coming to a pathetic passage, his voice began to falter, the tears rushed to his eyes, and he laid the book aside. He was fond of music, and accompanying himself on the piano, sang the romances of his friend

A . . . ., gipsy songs and some themes from operas; but he did not like learned music, and, in opposition to the common opinion, frankly declared that the sonatas of Beethoven tired him and made him sleepy, and that he knew nothing more beautiful than, "*Do not wake me youth*," as Semenoff sang it, and "*Not one*," as the gipsy Taninsha sang it. His nature was one of those which require a public in order to do anything good, and that only which the public called good was acknowledged by him as such. God knows whether he had any moral convictions. His life was so full of attractions of all kinds that he had never had time to form any, and he was always so fortunatet hat he did not feel the want of them.

With age, he looked at things from a fixed point of view and had unchangeable rules, but only on the basis of expediency. That mode of life which afforded temporal interest was the right one, according to his judgment, and he thought that thus only ought men to behave. He spoke with great facility, and this power, I think, increased the pliability of his morals, for he was able to speak of the same action now with commendation as something good, and now with abuse as a great meanness.

CHAPTER XI.

OCCUPATIONS IN THE STUDY AND THE DRAWING-ROOM.

TWILIGHT had set in when we reached home. Mama placed herself at the piano, and we children, sitting round a table, took pencil, paper, and colours to paint. I had only one cake of colour and that was blue, nevertheless I thought of representing the chase. In a very lively manner I painted a blue boy on a blue horse, blue dogs and—lo! I stopped—not knowing whether it was possible to paint a hare likewise blue. I ran into the study to consult papa; he was reading, and at my question, "Can there be blue hares?" without lifting his eyes from the book, he answered, "There can, my boy, there can." Returning to the table I represented the hare as blue, but subsequently found it necessary to transform it into a blue bush, which bush however, not pleasing me, I changed it to a tree, then this tree to a rick, until at last the whole paper became one blue sea, and I angrily tore it to pieces and went to dream in the large arm-chair.

Mama played the second concerto of Field, who had been her master. I dozed, and before my imagination arose something luminous with transparent visions. Then she played the *Sonate pathétique*, by Beethoven,

and I felt heavy, gloomy, and sad. Mama often played these two pieces, I therefore recollect so well the feelings they awakened in me; this feeling was like a reminiscence—but of what? It seemed as though I remembered something which had never been.

Opposite to me was the door of the study, and I now saw that Jacob entered it, as well as several persons in kaftans and with beards. The door was instantly shut.

"Now business begins," thought I. The affairs which were transacted in the study seemed to me the most important ones in the world. This opinion was confirmed by the circumstance that people approached the door of this room only on tip-toe and with whispers. The loud voice of papa was heard in there, and the scent of a cigar, always very attractive to me, was also perceivable. In my slumber I distinguished suddenly a well-known creak of boots in the "office." Karl Iwanitsh went on tip-toe, but with a gloomy and energetic expression on his face and some written paper in his hands, to the door of the cabinet, and knocked softly. It opened and was shut again behind him.

"I hope nothing will happen," thought I, "Karl Iwanitsh is offended—he is capable of anything"—

And again I slumbered.

Nothing did happen, however: after an hour's time I was again disturbed by the creak of boots. Karl Iwanitsh, wiping away with his pocket-handkerchief the tears which I observed upon his cheeks, came out, and muttering something between his teeth, went upstairs. Behind him came out papa also, and entered the drawing-room.

"Do you know what I have just now decided upon?" asked he, with a gay tone, putting his hand on mama's shoulder.

"What, love?"

"To take Karl Iwanitsh with the children. There is room in the carriage. They are used to him, and he seems much attached to them; 700 roubles a-year make no great difference, and then, poor devil, he is not a bad sort of a fellow." I could not understand at all why papa spoke of Karl Iwanitsh so disrespectfully.

"I am very glad," said mama," as well for the children's sake as for his own; he is a worthy old man."

"I wish you could have seen how moved he was when I told him that he might consider the 500 roubles as a present—but the most amusing thing is this bill which he gave me. It is worth seeing," added he with a smile and handing to mama a paper, upon which was some writing in the hand of Karl Iwanitsh. "That's capital!" The contents of this paper were as follows:

"Two book for the children—70 kopeek.*

"Coloured paper—gold frames—and a pop-guns—blockheads† for cutting out several box for presents—6 roubles, 55 k.

"Several book and a bows, presents for the childrens—8 r. 16 k.

"A gold watches promised to me by Peter Alexandrowitsh out of Moscaw, in the years 18..., for 140 r.

* The comical feature in this bill consists chiefly in its being written in very bad Russian, with continual mistakes as to plural and singular, which we have tried to render as nearly as possible.—*Translator.*

† This word has in Russian a double meaning.—*Translator.*

"Consequently Karl Mayer have to receive 139 rouble, 79 kopeek, beside his wage."

Taking into consideration this bill, in which Karl Iwanitsh requires all the money to be repaid which he has spent for presents, and also even that for a present promised to himself, people would think him no better than an unfeeling, avaricious egotist—and yet they would be mistaken!

Entering the study with papers in his hands and a well-prepared speech in his head, he intended to describe with great eloquence to papa, the wrongs which he had experienced in our house. But when he began with that trembling voice and with those affecting intonations with which he used to dictate to us, his eloquence worked most upon himself, and to such a degree that, when he came to the point where he had to say, "however sad it will be for me to part with the children," he lost his self-command completely, his utterance was almost choked, and he was obliged to draw his coloured pocket-handkerchief from his pocket.

"Yes, Peter Alexandrowitsh," said he, with tears, (this sentence was *not* from the prepared speech) "I am so accustomed to the children that I don't know what I shall do without them. I would rather serve you without any remuneration than not at all," and with one hand he wiped his eyes, and with the other he presented the bill.

I am firmly convinced that Karl Iwanitsh spoke most sincerely at this moment, because I know his good heart—but how to reconcile the bill with these words, even to this day I have never been able to make out!

"If the idea of going away be sad to you, feel sure that the idea of dismissing you is equally sad to me," said papa, tapping him on the shoulder, and, after a pause, adding—"I have changed my mind, you shall not leave us."

A little while before supper, Grisha entered the room. From the moment he came to the house, he had never ceased to sigh and weep, which, according to the opinion of those who believed in his prophetic power, portended some misfortune to our house. He now came to take leave, and said that to-morrow he would go farther on. I nudged Woloda and went to the door.

"What's the matter?"

"If we want to see Grisha's chains we must go upstairs immediately to the men-servants' rooms. Grisha sleeps in the second, we can sit in the storeroom and see everything."

"Capital! Wait here, I'll call the girls."

The girls came hurriedly, and we went upstairs. Not without some difficulty was it decided who should first go into the storeroom; there we cowered down and waited.

CHAPTER XII.

GRISHA.

WE all felt a little uneasy in the utter darkness; we pressed one against the other and said nothing. Soon afterwards Grisha came with soft steps. In one hand he carried his staff, in the other a tallow candle on a brass candlestick. We hardly ventured to breathe.

"Our Lord Jesus Christ—Holy Mother of God! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!" repeated he, with different intonations and abbreviations, belonging only to those who are wont to pronounce these words very often.

With prayers he placed his staff in the corner and looked at his bed, then began to undress. Unfastening his old black girdle, he slowly took off his torn nankeen kaftan and deposited it carefully on the back of the chair. His face did not now display its usual disquietude and idiocy; on the contrary, there was something tranquil, thoughtful, and even grand in it. His movements were slow and reasonable.

In his shirt he now lay quietly down on the bed, made the sign of the cross on all sides, and adjusted his chains beneath his shirt with great pain, as was visible from the expression of his face. Then he sat up again, looked gravely at his ragged shirt, rose, took the candle,

lifted it up to the shrine in which were some images of saints, made the sign of the cross, and turned the candle upside down—when the flame was extinguished with a hissing noise.

Through the window, which looked on the wood, shone the nearly full moon. The tall white figure of the idiot was revealed on one side by the pale silvery moonlight, but on the other side it was lost in a dark shadow, resting on the floor, the wall, and ceiling. In the court below the watchman beat on his brazen alarum plate. Grisha stood silently before the images, his large hands pressed to his breast, his head inclined, and continually sighing; then, with difficulty, knelt down and began to pray.

At first he said calmly some well-known prayers, accentuating only a few words, then he repeated them, but somewhat louder and with more emphasis. Now he began to mark them yet more forcibly and with an evident effort to pronounce them in the old Sclavonian church language. His expressions were disconnected but touching. He prayed for all his benefactors (thus he called those who received him hospitably)—among them for mama, for us, and also for himself, begging that God might forgive him his heavy sins, and repeating "God forgive my enemies!" Then moaning, he raised himself and fell to the floor, again and again repeating these words, and raising himself afresh, notwithstanding the heavy chains which made a rattling noise when they struck the floor.

Woloda pinched me rudely in the leg, but I took no notice of it, except by touching the place involuntarily

with my hand, and I continued to observe, with a feeling of childish astonishment, pity, and respect, all the gestures and words of Grisha.

Instead of the laughter and amusement which I expected on entering the storeroom, I felt my heart trembling and overwhelmed. Grisha continued for a long while in this state of religious ecstacy, improvising prayers. He repeated several times, "Lord, have mercy upon me!" And each time with new strength and feeling, and said, "Pardon me, Lord, teach me what to do, teach me what Thou wouldst have me to do, Lord!" with a manner as though he expected an immediate answer to his question—but sobbing and moaning alone were to be heard; finally he placed himself on his knees, folded his arms on his breast, and was silent.. I ventured to put my head softly through the door, holding my breath the while. Grisha was motionless, heavy sighs were heard from his breast; I saw tears glistening on the white of his blind eye lighted by the moon.

"Yes! Thy will be done!" exclaimed he, suddenly, with an expression impossible to describe; and prostrating himself with his forehead to the ground, he sobbed like a child.

'Much sand has run out since that time,'* many remembrances of the past are lost from my memory or have melted into confused dreams, and even poor Grisha himself has long since ended his last pilgrimage; but the impression which he produced upon me, and the

* Russian proverb.

feeling which he aroused, will never vanish from my mind.

Oh truly christian Grisha! Your faith was so strong that you actually felt the presence of God, your love so great that the words of themselves fell from your lips; you needed not reason to verify them, and how emphatically did you praise His greatness as you fell to the ground, speechless and in tears!

The sense of veneration with which I listened to Grisha could not however last for ever. My curiosity was satisfied, and having sat so long in the same position on the same spot, I now wanted to join in the general titter and fun which I heard behind me in the dark storeroom. Some one took my hand and whispered, "Whose hand is this?"

Notwithstanding the darkness I knew, by the touch and the low voice close to my ear, that it was Katenka. I took her arm. She withdrew it, and with this movement pushed a straw chair standing close to her. Grisha lifted his head, looked quietly round, and, murmuring prayers, rose and made the sign of the cross in all the corners of the room.

CHAPTER XIII.

NATALIA SAWISHNA.

IN the senioral court-yard of the village of Chabarowska, a long while ago, there ran about the girl Natashka in a cotton dress, bare-footed, gay, plump, and ruddy. At the request and entreaties of her father, the clarionet player Sawi, my grandfather took her 'upstairs,' that is, admitted her among the number of the mistress's female servants. The chambermaid, Natashka, distinguished herself in this capacity by her amiable temper and her zeal. When mama was a baby and required a nurse, Natashka was honoured with the charge. And in this new office she earned likewise praise and reward for her activity, faithfulness, and attachment to her young mistress. But the powdered head and the buckled shoes of the young and brisk official Foka, who had frequent communications with her in their service, captivated her loving though uncultivated heart. She ventured even to go and ask my grandfather's leave to marry Foka. My grandfather took her request very ill, grew angry, and as punishment exiled poor Natashka to the farm in a village situated in the steppes. When, however, all the six months she was away nobody could be found to replace her, she was recalled to her former duty. Returning,

her dress in rags, she appeared before grandpapa, fell at his feet, and besought him to restore her to his favour and kindness, and to forget the folly of which she had been found guilty, and which, she assured him, should never happen again. And in fact she kept her word.

From that time she called herself no longer Natashka, but Natalia Sawishna, and took to wearing a cap; all the love she had in her heart being henceforth bestowed upon her young charge.

When mama had a governess appointed for her, Natalia received the keys as housekeeper; the linen and the provisions were under her care. She fulfilled her new duties with equal fidelity and love. She lived only for her master's advantage; everything in which she saw fraud, extravagance, and waste, she endeavoured as much as she could to counteract. When mama married, wishing in some degree to reward Natalia Sawishna for her twenty years of labour and care, she called her, and, expressing in the tenderest words all her attachment and love, presented her with a stamped paper on which was written the freedom of Natalia Sawishna, and told her that, whether she would continue or not to serve in our house, she would always be allowed an annual pension of 300 roubles. Natalia listened in silence to all this, then taking the document in her hands and looking crossly at it, she muttered something between her teeth and ran out of the room, slamming the door. Not understanding the reason of such strange behaviour, mama, after a little while, went to Natalia's room. There she found her sitting, with weeping eyes, on a trunk, crumpling her pocket-

handkerchief between her fingers, and looking sadly at the pieces of the torn document scattered on the floor before her.

"What's the matter, dear Natalia Sawishna?" said mama, taking her hand.

"Nothing, ma'am," answered she; "it must be that I have become displeasing to you, since you thus chase me away from the house—well—I will go."

She withdrew her hand, and with difficulty restraining her tears, rose to quit the room. Mama stopped her, and then, embracing each other, they wept together.

From the time I can remember myself, I also remember Natalia Sawishna, her love and tenderness; but only now do I understand their full value. At that time it never entered my mind what a rare, wonderful being this old domestic was. She not only never talked of, but did not seem to think of herself—her whole life was love and self-sacrifice. So accustomed was I to her affection and disinterestedness, that I never imagined things could be otherwise; I never thought of thanking her, or of asking myself, "Is she, too, happy? is she satisfied?" It frequently occurred that, under some pretext or other, I ran away from my lessons to her room, sat down, and began to dream aloud without being disturbed by her presence. She was constantly occupied with something—either mending stockings, arranging the shelves which filled her room, or marking the linen—all the while noticing the nonsense which I talked; how, being a general, I would marry an extraordinary beauty, buy a chesnut horse, build a house of glass, and have the relatives of Karl Iwanitsh from Saxony—and the

like; to all of which she would say, "Yes, my love, yes!" Usually, on my rising and preparing to go, she would open a blue trunk, inside the cover of which was glued the coloured picture of a hussar taken from a pomade bottle, and a sketch made by Woloda, and take out of this trunk a pastile for fumigating, which she lighted and shook, and then told me—

"These, dear, are pastiles that your late grandfather —now in heaven—after he had been against the Turks, brought back from Otshakoff. This is nearly the last," added she, each time with a sigh.

In the trunks which filled her room were to be found almost everything. Whatever might be wanted, everybody said, "You must ask Natalia Sawishna," and, in fact, after searching a little, she usually found the required object, and said, "It is good to take care of everything." In her trunks there were thousands of such things, which nobody in the house, except herself, ever thought of preserving.

I was once angry with her. It happened thus. After dinner I poured myself out a glass of Kwass, dropped the decanter, and stained the tablecloth.

"Call Natalia Sawishna, that she may rejoice at her favourite's doing," said mama.

Natalia came, and seeing the mess which I had made, shook her head; thereupon mama whispered something into her ear, and, glancing at me, she left the room.

After dinner, in the merriest mood in the world, I skipped out to run to the drawing-room, when suddenly out of the door rushed Natalia with the tablecloth in her hand, caught me, and, in spite of my

desperate opposition, rubbed my face with the wet part, repeating, "Don't *thou* spoil the tablecloth in future!"

I was so offended that I roared with fury.

"What!" said I to myself, entering the drawing-room and almost blinded by tears, "Natalia Sawishna, simple Natalia, says *thou* to me and rubs me in the face with the wet tablecloth, as if I were a servant-boy. Oh, that is horrid!"

When Natalia saw that I was so much annoyed, she ran away, and I, continuing to walk about, schemed how to punish the bold Natalia for her offence.

After some minutes Natalia returned, softly approached, and began to comfort me.

"Be quiet, my love—don't cry—pardon me my rudeness—I did wrong. You pardon me, darling, don't you? that's a dear!"

She took from beneath her handkerchief a *cornet* of pink paper, in which were two little cakes and a grape, and gave it me with a trembling hand. I had no courage to look this kind old woman in the face, but turning away I took the paper, and my tears flowed still faster, though not now from anger, but, on the contrary, from love and shame.

CHAPTER XIV.

PARTING.

THE day following the events before described, the carriage and the britshka stood at the door at noon. Nicola, dressed for the journey, with breeches pushed down his boots and an old overcoat tightly fastened with a sash, stood in the britshka and laid cloaks and cushions on the seats; when they seemed to be piled up high enough he sat down on them, but, nevertheless, jumped up again and settled them once more.

"Can you do me the supreme favour, Nicola Dimitritsh, if possible, of placing master's dressing-case there with you?" said papa's valet-de-chambre breathlessly, standing up suddenly in the carriage; "it is but small."

"You should have told me before, Michel Iwanitsh," answered Nicola abruptly and angrily, throwing a bundle with all his might to the bottom of the britshka. "Good gracious! my head turns like a whirlpool, and now *you* come with your dressing-case"—added he, lifting his cap and wiping the drops of perspiration from his sunburnt brow.

Peasants in kaftans or overcoats, or simply shirts, and without hats, women in their national dresses and striped handkerchiefs, holding children by the hand, barefooted little ones crowding round the staircase,

staring at the carriage and chattering among themselves, filled the court-yard. One of the postillions, an old man in a winter hat and cloak, held the pole of the carriage and carefully tried how it would go; the other postillion—a young man in a white shirt only, with pink gussets* at the sleeves, in a black lambswool cap which he, adjusting his flaxen hair, cocked sometimes on one side, sometimes on the other—laid his coat upon the coach-box, threw back the reins and cracked the twisted whip, looking now at his boots, now at the other drivers who greased the wheels of the britshka, the one lifting with difficulty the wheels, the other greasing them all round carefully so as not to lose a bit of grease. Weary posthorses of various colours stood at the gate and lashed away the flies with their tails. Some of them tramped with their coarse hairy feet, and winked their eyes and slumbered; some leaned on each other from fatigue, and some tore from the ground the leaves and stems of dark-green fern which grew near the staircase. Some of the greyhounds, breathing heavily, rested in the sun, others went under the carriage and licked the grease from the wheels. Through the whole air there was a dusty mist, the horizon was of a grey-lilac colour, but not one single cloud was to be seen. A strong wind from the south raised volumes of dust from roads and fields, agitated the poplars and birch-trees in the garden, and carried far away the falling yellow leaves. I sat at the window and waited impatiently for the end of the preparations.

* It is a custom with Russian peasants to make the gussets of men's shirts of a different colour from the rest of the material.

When we every one of us sat in the drawing-room around the table, to pass for the last time a few minutes all together, it never occurred to me what a sad moment was near at hand. The most absurd thoughts occupied me. I asked myself which driver would go with the carriage and which with the britshka? which of us would sit with papa and which with Karl Iwanitsh? and why I must be wrapped up perpetually in a scarf and wadded boots?

"Am I so delicate? Shall I be frozen?" thought I. "I wish all this would come to an end—we ought to take our seats and start."

"To whom shall I hand over the list of the children's linen?" asked Natalia Sawishna of mama, as she entered the room with a paper in her hand and eyes red from crying.

"Give it to Nicola, and come then to take leave of them." The old woman wanted to say something, but suddenly stopped, covered her face with her pocket-handkerchief, and motioning with her hand, left the room. It was as though something pricked me to the heart when I saw the gesture—but the impatience to go was yet stronger than this feeling, and I continued, with complete indifference, to listen to papa's conversation with mama. They spoke on subjects which evidently interested neither the one nor the other—"What must be bought for the house? What would Princess Sophia or Madame Julie say? Would the roads be good?" and so forth.

Foka entered, and with exactly the same tone and gesture, with which he would have announced dinner,

said, "The horses are ready." I observed that mama trembled and grew pale at this announcement, as though it were something unexpected.

Foka was ordered to shut all the doors of the room. I was highly amused by that—just as though things were to be concealed from some one in particular!

When every one else was seated, Foka likewise took a seat on the last chair, but scarcely had he done so when the door creaked and all looked towards it. Natalia Sawishna entered hastily, and without raising her eyes, sat down on the same chair with Foka. Even now I see before me as if in reality, the bald head, the wrinkled immoveable face of Foka, and the bent, kind figure in the cap, with some grey hair looking out from underneath. Both settled themselves on the same chair, but they did not feel easy.

I continued to be preoccupied and impatient. The ten minutes during which we sat with closed doors, seemed to me an hour. At last all rose, made the sign of the cross, and began to take leave. Papa embraced mama and kissed her repeatedly.

"Enough, my love," said papa, "we are not parting for ever."

"It is however very sad," replied mama, her voice trembling with emotion.

When I heard this faltering voice, saw those quivering lips and eyes brimful of tears, I forgot everything, and I felt so sorrowful, ill, and miserable, that I would much rather have run away than bid her farewell. I understood in this moment that, while embracing papa, she already took leave of us. Then she embraced

Woloda several times, and made the sign of the cross over him; I, thinking that it was now my turn, advanced, but she took him again and again to her heart and blessed him. At last I embraced her, and clinging to her, wept—wept—thinking of nothing but my grief.

When we went to take our seats, importunate servants came to bid us good-bye in the hall. Their expressions, "Allow me to take your hand," their sounding kisses on our shoulders,* the odour of their greasy heads, excited a feeling in me akin to vexation with the provoking people. Under the influence of this feeling I very crossly gave a kiss to the cap of Natalia Sawishna when she approached to take leave of me. It is strange that, even now, I perfectly recollect the faces of the servants, and should be able to draw them with the minutest accuracy, but the face and attitude of mama have entirely vanished from my imagination; it may be for the reason that during all this time I had not once the desire to look closely at her. It seemed to me that, in doing this, our mutual grief would break out to an intolerable degree.

I jumped, before any one else, into the carriage and took one of the back seats. The raised back of the carriage hindered me from seeing anything, but I felt instinctively that mama was still there.

"Shall I look at her once more or not?" said I to myself.

"Well, one last time," and I looked out from the carriage towards the staircase. At the same time mama,

* Russian fashion for inferior people with their superiors.

moved by the same impulse, had come to the opposite side of the carriage and had uttered my name. Hearing her voice behind me, I turned round towards her, but so quickly that we knocked our heads together; she smiled sadly, and ardently kissed me for the last time.

When we had driven a few steps I determined to look once more at her. The wind lifted the blue handkerchief which she had tied round her head; bent down and covering her face with her hands, she slowly ascended the staircase. Foka was supporting her.

Papa sat beside me and did not say anything; I, almost breathless with tears, felt a sensation in my throat which made me fear that I should be choked. When we came out on the open road we saw a white pocket-handkerchief waving from the balcony. I waved mine in return, and this movement calmed me a little. I continued to weep, and the thought that my tears were a proof of my affection, satisfied and comforted me.

After a little while I became more tranquil, and looked with interest at the objects which we passed, and the hinder part of the "led horse" which ran on my side. I saw how it moved its tail, how it lifted one foot after the other, how the twisted whip of the driver fell on it and the feet began to jump together; I saw how the backband jumped after it, and on the backband the rings, and how all was covered with the white foam of the horse. Then I looked around on the undulating fields of ripe corn, on the dark arable land, on which were to be seen ploughs, peasants, horses with foals; on the footprints, even on the coach-box to know which of the men drove us; and my face still wet with

tears, my thoughts were already far from her of whom I had just taken leave, perhaps for ever. But every remembrance led back my thoughts to her. I remembered the mushroom which I found the evening before under the birch-trees; how Lubotshka quarrelled with Katenka whose it should be; I remembered also how they both wept in taking leave of us.

And I regretted my absence from them, regretted Natalia Sawishna and the birch-tree alley, and regretted Foka! Yes, even the naughty Mimi—I regretted all, all and everything! And poor mama! The tears again rushed to my eyes—but not for long.

CHAPTER XV.

CHILDHOOD.

HAPPY, happy, never-returning time of childhood! How can we avoid loving and dwelling on its recollections? They cheer and elevate my soul, and become to me a source of better joys!

Sometimes, when dreaming it over again, I fancy that, having run about till I was tired, I sit down, as I used to do, in my high arm-chair at the tea-table; it is late; long since have I drunk my cup of milk; my eyes are heavy with sleep, but I do not stir from my place; I sit and listen. How should I not listen? Mama is speaking to somebody, and the sound of her voice is so melodious and so kind! How much these sounds only communicate to my heart! My eyes veiled by drowsiness, I sadly look at her; suddenly she becomes smaller and smaller, her face seems not more than a point—but still it is so clearly visible to me—I see how she looks at me and smiles. I am pleased that she seems so little. I wink still more with my eyes, and she seems not larger than that boy whom I see in the pupil of another's eye; but I rouse myself and the enchantment vanishes; I nearly shut my eyes, again turn round, try to recal the apparition—but it is in vain.

I rise, get on my legs, and fall comfortably back on the arm-chair.

"There, you are falling asleep again, Nikolinka," says mama; "you had better go upstairs."

"I won't go to sleep, ma," I reply, though almost inaudibly, but harmonious dreams are filling my imagination; the sound sleep of childhood closes my eyelids, and for some minutes I forget all and sleep until I am awakened by some one. I feel in my slumber as if a soft hand stroked me; I know it by the touch, and though still asleep I involuntarily seize the hand and firmly, firmly press my lips upon it. Every one had already gone away, one candle only was left burning in the drawing-room; mama had said that she would herself wake me; she sits down on the arm-chair in which I sleep, her wonderfully soft hand caresses my hair, and close to my ear I hear her beloved, well-known voice—

"Get up, my love, it is time to go to bed!"

No envious look is disturbing her, she is not afraid of pouring on me all her tenderness and love. I do not awake, but still more firmly kiss her hand.

"Get up, my angel!"

She passes her other hand round my neck and her fingers move quickly and tickle me. The room is quiet and half dark, my nerves are roused by the tickling, I am awakening; mama sits near me, she touches me, I hear her voice and feel her presence. All this induces me to leap up, to throw my arms round her neck, to hide my head in her bosom, and to say, sighing—

"Ah! dear, darling mama, how much I love you!"

She smiles with her sad, enchanting smile, takes my head between both her hands, kisses me on the forehead, and takes me on her knees.

"Do you love me so much?" She is silent for some minutes, and then continues—"Love me always, never forget me. If your mama is no longer here, will you never forget her—never, Nikolinka?"

And she kisses me still more fervently.

"Oh, do not speak so, darling mama, my own dear mama!" exclaim I, embracing her knees, and tears of love and joy fall from my eyes.

After such events, how I used to go upstairs and stand before the images and say, with a wonderful feeling, "Lord, bless papa and mama!" and repeat a prayer which for the first time my childish lips had whispered for my beloved mother; the love for God and the love for her strangely blending into one emotion.

After prayers I wrapped myself up in the bed-clothes, my heart was light, peaceful, happy; one dream followed another—dreams of what? They were all indefinite, but full of pure love and hopes of happiness. I recollect that I used to think of Karl Iwanitsh and his bitter fate; he was the only being whom I knew to be unhappy, and so sad did I feel, so much did I love him, that tears fell from my eyes, and I thought, "May God grant him happiness, grant me the possibility of helping him, of diminishing his sufferings; I am ready to sacrifice everything for him!" Then some cherished toy, a china dog or hare, was stuck in the bed corner behind the pillow, and it was a pleasure to think how well, warm, and comfortable it was there. I also prayed that God

might bestow happiness upon all men, that everyone might be satisfied, and that there might be fine weather to-morrow for our walk. I then turned on the other side, and now thoughts and dreams entangled and mixed themselves. I slept tranquilly, soundly, my face still wet with tears.

Will there ever at any time in life return this freshness and carelessness, this necessity for love and strength of faith which we feel in the years of childhood? What epoch of life could be better than that in which the two best virtues, innocent gaiety and boundless seeking for love, are the only objects of life?

Where are our ardent prayers? Where our best gifts, those pure tears of emotion which our guardian angel dries up with a smile, while pouring out over us harmonious dreams of ineffable childish delight?

Is it possible that life has left such heavy traces in my heart, that these tears and ecstacies have for ever vanished? Is it possible that I have now nothing but the recollection?

CHAPTER XVI.

VERSES.

SCARCELY a month after our arrival at Moscow, I sat upstairs in my grandmama's house, at a large table, writing. Opposite to me sat the drawing-master, and gave the finishing touches to the head of a Turk in a turban, drawn with black chalk. Woloda, stretching his neck, stood behind the master and looked over his shoulder. This head was Woloda's first production with black chalk, and to-day, grandmama's nameday,* it was to be presented to her.

"Will you not put another shadow here?" said Woloda to the master, raising himself on his toes and pointing at the neck of the Turk.

"No, it's not necessary," replied the master, putting pencil and drawing-pen in the japan folding-box; "now it is perfect, and you need not do anything more to it. Well, and you Nikolinka," said he, rising and still looking askew at the Turk, "tell us, at last, your secret. What are you going to give to grandmama? It is true another head would have been the best. Good-bye, young gentlemen," added he, and taking his hat and card-board, he went out.

* In the Greek Church it is customary to celebrate the day on which one's name occurs in the calendar.—*Translator.*

At that moment I thought too that another head would have been better than that at which I had been working. When we were told that grandmama's name-day would soon come, and that we had to get ready some presents for her, I took it in my head to write some verses in honour of the occasion, and immediately composed two with rhymes, hoping that the rest would likewise soon be found. I really do not recollect how this idea, peculiar for a child, came to me—but I know I liked it extremely, and upon all questions on the subject I answered no more than that I should duly offer something to grandmama, but would not say beforehand what it was.

Contrary to my expectation I found that, after the two verses made in the first heat of enthusiasm, notwithstanding all my efforts, not one more verse would come! I began to read different poems from our books, but neither Dimitreff nor Dershawin would help me. On the contrary, they only more strongly confirmed my feeling of incapability. Knowing that Karl Iwanitsh liked to write verses, I stole softly to look among his papers, and found, with a number of German verses, one in the Russian language, proceeding, as it seemed, from his own pen.

PETRAFFSKOI, 1828, 3rd June.

To L....

Remember near,
Remember far,
Remember me!
To-day believing and for ever,
Beyond my grave, still oh remember
How truly I have loved thee!

KARL MEYER.

These verses, written in a fine, round hand, on thin letter-paper, pleased me on account of the touching sentiment which seemed to have inspired them. I learned them by heart at once, and decided to take them as model. Now the affair was much easier. On the nameday a congratulation, consisting of twelve verses, was complete, and I sat at the table in our study, copying them on vellum-paper.

Two sheets were already spoiled, not because I thought it necessary to alter anything—the verses seemed to me perfect—but from the third line the end of each began to curve more and more upwards, making it visible at last, that it was written with a want of adherence to the horizontal direction, which I could not endure to see.

The third sheet was likewise crooked, but I was resolved not to copy any more. In my verses I congratulated grandmama, wished her many happy years, and concluded thus:

> Endeav'ring you to please and cheer,
> We love you like our mama dear.

This seemed not so very bad—nevertheless, the last verse strangely offended my ear.

"Lo-ve—you—li-ke—our—ma-ma—dear,"—repeated I, murmuring.

"What other rhyme could there be instead of mama dear?—fear?—steer? Well, let it go! They are better than Karl Iwanitsh's!"

And so I wrote down the last verse. Then I read the whole composition, with feeling and gestures, aloud in the bedroom. The verses were completely without

metre, but at that I did not stop; the last, however, displeased me still more than ever. I sat on my bed and thought—

"Why did I write, like our mama dear? She is not here, and it was not necessary to mention her; true, I love and respect grandmama, but still not so—*why write this?* Why tell a lie? Granted! These are only verses! but it was by no means necessary"—

At that moment the tailor came, bringing some new clothes for us.

"Well, let it be!" said I, with great impatience, putting the verses angrily under the pillow, and running to adorn myself with the new Moscow clothes.

They fitted marvellously, the brown half-dress-coats, with yellow buttons—all close, not as at the village where growth was allowed for—the black trousers, also closely fitting, which displayed the form, and lay smoothily over the boots.

"At last I have real trousers on!" thought I, looking at my legs with the utmost gratification. I concealed from everyone that the new clothes were horribly tight and uncomfortable, and, on the contrary, said, that if there were a fault it was that they were not tight enough. I stood a long while before the looking-glass and combed my elaborately pomaded head, but try as much as I would I could not bring down the hairs on the crown; whenever I left off combing, up they sprang again, and stood out in different directions, which gave a ridiculous expression to my face.

Karl Iwanitsh dressed in the other room, and somebody brought his blue dress-coat and white linen to the

study. At the door leading downstairs, the voice of one of the maid-servants was heard, and I went to see what was wanted. She held in her hand a well-starched shirt, and said that she had been up all night to get it ready. I took it, and asked if grandmama were yet up.

"Of course! she has had her coffee, and the priest has arrived. Well, you are a fine fellow!" added she, looking smilingly at my new clothes.

This observation made me blush; I turned round on one leg, snapped my fingers and jumped away, wishing by these manœuvres to make her feel that she did not even yet fully understand *what* a fine fellow I really was.

When I brought the shirt to Karl Iwanitsh he did not want it, having taken another; now, standing before a small looking-glass, with both his hands he tied his cravat, and tried, by different movements of the head, whether it fitted his well-shaved chin quite comfortably. At last he took us to grandmama. I cannot help laughing now when I remember what a smell of pomade we three left behind as we descended the staircase.

Karl Iwanitsh had a box in his hands which he had made himself, Woloda held his drawing, and I my verses; each of us had some words ready prepared with which to offer his presents. At the same moment, however, that Karl Iwanitsh opened the door the priest put on his vestment, and prayer began.

Grandmama was in the room; bent down and leaning on the back of a chair, she stood near the wall, absorbed in prayer; next to her stood papa. He turned to us and smiled, when we, hurriedly hiding our presents

behind our backs, tried to remain unobserved, standing at the door. The whole effect of a surprise, upon which we had reckoned, was lost entirely. When, at last, all had made the sign of the cross, I suddenly felt myself under the oppressive influence of an unconquerable, deadly embarrassment, so that the courage to offer my present completely failed me. I concealed myself behind Karl Iwanitsh, who, with the most solemn expression, congratulated grandmama, and taking his box from the right hand into the left, presented it to her and retired a few steps to make way for Woloda. Grandmama seemed highly pleased with the box, which was adorned with a gold border, and she smiled in the most friendly manner to express her thanks. It was evident, however, that she did not know where to place her box, and for that reason, probably, handed it to papa, begging him to observe how exceedingly well it was made.

Having satisfied his curiosity, papa gave it to the priest, who seemed particularly delighted with it also, and shook his head and looked with astonishment now at the box, now at the artist who made such wonderful things. Woloda presented his Turk, and received a similar flattering approbation on all sides. It was my turn now; grandmama turned to me with her kindest smile.

Those who have experienced what embarrassment is will know that this feeling increases in direct proportion with delay, whilst decision diminishes in the same measure; in other words, the longer this disposition continues the more invincible it grows and the less decision remains.

All my remaining boldness and energy forsook me while Karl Iwanitsh and Woloda were giving their presents, and my embarrassment reached the highest point; I felt how the blood rushed from my heart to my head, how one blush succeeded another on my face, and how on brow and nose stood drops of perspiration. My ears were burning, I trembled from head to foot, changed from one foot to the other, and stirred not from the spot.

"Well, Nikolinka, tell us what have you brought, a box or a drawing?" asked papa. There was nothing else to be done: with a trembling hand I forwarded the folded, fatal paper; but my voice absolutely failed me, and I stood silently before grandmama. I could not overcome the dreadful idea that, instead of a display of the expected drawing, some bad verses of mine would be read before all, and the words "our mama dear" would clearly prove that I had never loved and that I forgot her. How shall I express my sufferings during the time that grandmama began to read my verses aloud, when, not able to decipher them, she stopped in the middle, or looked at papa with a smile, which I at the time thought to be one of ridicule, when she did not pronounce them as I wished, and when, on account of her weak sight, she did not conclude, but gave them to papa, requesting him to read them again from the beginning? I fancied this last was because she did not like to read such stupid and crookedly written stuff, and because she wanted to point out to papa my utter want of feeling. I expected he would slap my face with these verses and say, "You bad boy, don't forget

your mama—take that for it!" But nothing of the kind happened; on the contrary, when the whole was read, grandmama said, "Charming!" and kissed me on the forehead. Our presents were put, together with two cambric pocket-handkerchiefs and a snuff-box with mama's portrait, on the little table attached to the great Voltairian arm-chair in which grandmama always sat.

"The Princess Barbara Ilinitsha!" announced one of the two footmen who used to stand behind grandmama's carriage.

Grandmama looked thoughtfully at the portrait on the snuff-box, and made no answer.

"Shall I ask her in, madam?" asked the footman.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PRINCESS KORNAKOFF.

"ASK her in!" said grandmama, settling herself as far back in the arm-chair as possible.

The princess was a woman of about forty-five years old, little and delicate, with shrivelled skin, greyish-green, disagreeable eyes, whose expression clearly contradicted the unnaturally friendly one assumed by the rest of her face. From underneath the velvet bonnet, adorned with an ostrich feather, the reddish hair was visible; the eyebrows and eyelashes seemed still lighter and redder on the unhealthy colour of her skin. Yet with all that, thanks to her lively movements, her small hands, and the peculiar dryness of her features, her general appearance had something aristocratic and energetic. The princess talked a great deal, and, to judge from her eloquence, belonged to that class of people who always speak as if somebody contradicted them, although nobody else says a word; first she raised her voice, then she lowered it—now began suddenly to talk with new vivacity and looked at the persons, present though not participating in the conversation, as if endeavouring to reinforce herself by this look.

Notwithstanding the princess's kissing grandmama's hand and calling her continually, 'my good aunt,' I ob-

served that grandmama was not much pleased with her; she raised her eyebrows in a peculiar way when listening to the princess's tale why Prince Michael had been prevented from calling and congratulating grandmama, in spite of his ardent wish to do so—and she answered in Russian the French speech of the princess, sharply accentuating her words:

"I am much obliged to you, my dear, for your kindness,—that Prince Michael did not come—you need not even mention it—he has so much to do—and besides, what pleasure could he have in coming to see an old woman?" And without allowing the princess time to reply, she continued, "How are your children, my dear?"

"Well, thank God, aunt! they grow, learn, play—particularly Etienne, the eldest, who has such foolish tricks that it is impossible to keep him in order; but he is clever—a promising youth. Can you imagine, cousin," continued she, turning exclusively to papa because grandmama, not taking the least interest in the princess's children, turned to her grandsons, took with difficulty the verses from underneath the box and unfolded them—"Can you imagine that he, one day"—

And the princess inclining herself towards papa, told him something with great vivacity. Having finished the tale she laughed, and then looking enquiringly at papa, said,

"What a boy, cousin? He deserved to be beaten, but the trick was so spirited and amusing that I pardoned him."

And the princess, looking at grandmama, continued to laugh.

"Ah! perhaps you *beat* your children, my dear?" asked grandmama, raising her eyebrows significantly, and laying a peculiar stress on the word 'beat.'

"Alas! my good aunt," said the princess in a good-humoured tone, with a glance at papa, "I know your views on this subject, but allow me to differ from your opinion in this respect; however much I reflected, read and talked about this matter, I was always obliged to conclude that it is a necessity to act upon children by fear. In order to make something of a child you must make it fear something; is it not so, cousin? and what, I ask you, do children fear so much as a rod?"

She looked inquiringly at us as she spoke, and I confess I did not feel quite comfortable at this moment.

"Whatever you may say, a boy of twelve years of age—nay, even of fourteen—is still a child; with girls it is another affair."

"How very fortunate that I am not her son," thought I.

"Oh, very well," said grandmama, folding up my verses and hiding them beneath the box, as if, after such an exposition of views, the princess was not worthy to listen to this production.

"Very well, my dear, but please tell me how you can, after that, ask for delicate feelings from your children?" And thinking this argument unanswerable, grandmama, in order to shorten the conversation, added,

"However on such a subject people must follow their own opinion."

The princess did not choose to answer, but smiled condescendingly as if in token of her looking indulgently

upon strange prejudices in a being whom she pretended so much to revere.

"Oh, by-the-bye, introduce me to your young people!" said she looking at us with another gracious smile.

We rose, and looking at the princess, did not in the least know what to do in order to mark that we were introduced.

"Kiss the princess's hand," said papa.

"I ask you to love your old aunt," said she kissing Woloda on his hair, "although we are not near relatives. I count on the degree of friendship, not on that of relationship," added she addressing herself in preference to grandmama; but the latter remained hostile and replied:

"Eh! my dear, do they call that relationship now-a-days?"

"This will be my man of the world," observed papa, pointing at Woloda; "and this is a poet," added he, while I was kissing the little dry hand of the princess, and vividly picturing this hand holding a rod, and applying it vigorously.

"Which?" asked the princess, holding my hand.

"This little one, with the tuft of hair on the top," replied my father smiling.

"What has he to do with my tuft of hair? Is there no other subject to talk of?" thought I, and retired to a corner.

I had the strangest ideas of beauty; I considered Karl Iwanitsh to be one of the handsomest men in the world, but I knew perfectly well that I was myself ugly, and never deceived myself in that respect; I therefore

did feel offended at every observation concerning my exterior. I well remember one day after dinner—I was then six years of age—when they were talking at home about my personal appearance, how mama tried to find something good in my face, and said that I had intelligent eyes, an agreeable smile; and how, after my father having examined me and proved the contrary, she was obliged to confess that I was ugly; then, when I approached her after dinner to pay my respects, she said, patting my cheek:

"You know, Nikolinka, that nobody will love you for your face, therefore you must try the more to be a good and sensible boy."

Though these words confirmed me in the opinion that I was not handsome, they also strengthened in me the hope that I might become a good and sensible boy.

However, sometimes I had moments of despair on this account; I imagined that no happiness on earth could be for a man with so large a nose, such thick lips and small grey eyes, as I had; I asked God to do a miracle, to change me to a beauty; and I would fain have given anything which I actually possessed or hoped in future to possess, to have a handsome face.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PRINCE IWAN IWANITSH.

WHEN the princess, having now heard the verses, overwhelmed the composer with praise, grandmama became softened, began to talk French with her, ceased to call her 'my dear,' and gave her an invitation to come in the evening with all the children, which the princess having accepted, she took her leave. So many guests came to congratulate grandmama, that the courtyard, where they had to drive up, was the whole day crowded with carriages.

"Good morning, my dear cousin!" said one of the guests, entering the room and kissing grandmama's hand. This was a man of seventy years of age, of stately figure, in a military uniform, with large epaulettes and an embroidered collar, hanging from which a white cross was visible. His face had an expression of frankness and quietness, and the simplicity and easiness of his manners delighted me. Notwithstanding the thin half-circle of hair which alone was left upon the head, and notwithstanding the position of the upper lip, indicating the want of teeth, this face was yet remarkably handsome.

The prince Iwan Iwanitsh had made a brilliant career at an early age, towards the end of the last century, thanks to his noble character, his fine exterior, his

remarkable bravery, his influential kinsmen, and particularly to his good fortune. He continued to serve, and soon his ambition was satisfied in such a way that nothing was left to wish for in that direction. From his early youth he had behaved so as to prepare himself for the occupation of the prominent position in the world, in which fate actually placed him later; therefore, although (even in his prosperous life as in all others) there were some failures, misfortunes and griefs, he never altered either his quietness of character, his elevated tone of thought, or his peculiarly religious and moral mind, and thus obtained universal esteem—not so much on account of his important situation, as of his perseverance and trustworthiness. He had not a very distinguished intellect, but, owing to the eminence he occupied, from whence he looked down upon little agitations, he had adopted high points of view. He was in reality good and feeling, but somewhat cold and haughty in his manner, probably in order to keep himself on the defensive against the continual requests and claims addressed to him from all kinds of people who wished to profit by his influence. His coldness, however, was softened by the condescending politeness of a man in the highest station of society. He was well instructed, but his culture was that of a youth of the end of the last century. He had read everything remarkable written in the French language during the eighteenth century, either of philosophy or belles-lettres, and liked quoting passages from Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Molière, Montaigne, Fénélon; he knew history pretty well from Ségur, and the old classics from

French translations, but he had no idea of mathematics, of natural philosophy, nor of contemporaneous literature; however he knew very well how to be silent in conversation, or when to make some general remarks on Göthe, Schiller, Byron, etc., though he had never read them. In spite of his completely French culture, he was simple in his speech and hated originality, saying that it was a quality of rude natures. Society was necessary for him wherever he lived; in Moscow or in the country he had it constantly, and on certain days saw almost the whole town. An introduction from him was a passport to every drawing-room in town; most of the young and pretty fashionable ladies willingly offered him their rosy cheeks, when he, as it were with fatherly feeling, applied his lips, and people in high position felt flattered at being invited to his parties.

The prince had now few friends left, who, like grandmama, were of the same standing with himself, had had the same education, and saw things from the same points of view; therefore he highly cherished his old, intimate friendship with her, and constantly paid her the greatest respect.

I hardly ventured to look at the prince; the honour shewn to him from all sides, the large epaulettes, the particular joy with which grandmama received him, and the fact that he alone seemed not afraid of her, turned to her with perfect liberty, and even had the boldness to call her "my cousin,"—all this awakened in me a feeling of reverence for him near to that which I felt for grandmama.

When my verses were shewn to him, he called me

and said, "Who knows, my cousin, but he may be a second Dershawin." And at the same time he pinched my cheek so hard, that I was only prevented from crying by the necessity of taking it for a caress.

The other guests dispersed, with them papa and Woloda; grandmama, the prince, and I remained alone in the drawing-room.

"Why did our dear Natalia Nicolajewna not come?" suddenly asked the prince after some silence.

"Ah, my dear," replied grandmama, lowering her voice, and putting her hand on the sleeve of his uniform, "she would certainly have come if she were at liberty to do what she likes. She wrote to me that Peter proposed she should go with him, but that she refused, as their income had not been very prosperous this year; besides that there was no reason for her to go this year with the whole family to Moscow, as Lubotshka was yet very young, and the boys, living with me, she felt even safer than if she were with them herself."

"All this is very good," continued grandmama in such a tone as clearly shewed that she thought it by no means good "for the boys; it was time long ago to send them hither that they might study and learn how to behave in the world; for what sort of education could they get in the village? The eldest will soon be thirteen, the second eleven years of age. You see, cousin, they are like savages, they do not even know how to enter the room."

"I cannot understand, with all that," said the prince, "these external complaints of a ruined fortune. *He* has a very handsome income, and Natalia has

Chabarowska, where we once in our time played comedies, and which I know like my own hand—it is a splendid property, and must bring an excellent revenue."

"I tell you, as my most intimate friend," replied grandmama with a sad expression, "all this seems to me a mere pretext to favour his wish to live alone, to stroll about in the clubs, at dinner parties, and who knows where—and she suspects nothing. You know her—that angelic sweetness—she trusts *him* in everything. He assured her that the children must come to Moscow, and she, alone with a stupid governess, stay in the village—and she believes him: if he were to tell her that the children must be beaten, as the princess Barbara beats hers, she would perhaps also consent to that," added grandmama, leaning back in her arm-chair with an expression of contempt; and after some minutes' silence, taking one of the cambric handkerchiefs to wipe away the tears which stole down her cheeks, she continued, "Yes, my friend, I often think that he cannot value and understand her, and that she, notwithstanding all her goodness, her love for him, and her care to conceal her grief—which, however, I know but too well—she *cannot* be happy with *him*, and mind my words if he does not—"

And grandmama covered her face with the handkerchief.

"Ah, my good friend," said the prince, reproachfully, "I see you are not at all reasonable; why always grieve and cry over imagined evils? Well, this is indeed wrong! I have known him long, and am sure that he is an attentive, kind, excellent husband, and

—what is the principal thing—a perfectly noble man."

Having involuntarily overheard a conversation which was not destined for me, I stole on tiptoe out of the room in a dreadful agitation.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE IWINS.

"WOLODA! Woloda! the Iwins are coming!" exclaimed I, seeing from the window three boys in blue overcoats, who, followed by their young tutor, advanced with light steps on the trottoir opposite to our house.

The Iwins were our relatives, and nearly of the same age with ourselves; soon after our arrival in Moscow we became acquainted with each other.

The second of the brothers, Seriosha, was a boy with dark curly hair, with a turned-up, strongly marked nose, very fresh, red lips, which were never quite shut, but shewed the row of his white teeth, beautiful dark-blue eyes, and an uncommonly bold expression of the face. He never smiled, but was either completely serious or laughed with a clear, cheerful, agreeable laugh. His very original beauty captivated me at the first look; I felt an irresistible attraction towards him! Only to see him sufficed to make me happy, and at one time all the powers of my heart were concentrated in this sole wish. When I by chance did not see him for three or four days, I felt tired and sad even to tears. Awake or asleep, I was constantly dreaming of him; when I lay down I wished to see him in my dream,

and when I shut my eyes and thus obtained a view of him, I cherished this apparition as my best delight. So much did I value the feeling that I could speak of it to nobody in the world. It may be that it annoyed him to see my anxious eyes constantly directed upon him, or that plainly he felt no sympathy at all for me; in any case he preferred evidently to play and talk with Woloda; but with all that I was satisfied, I wished and asked for nothing more, and was always ready to sacrifice anything for him. Besides the strange fascination he exercised over me, I felt, in no less degree, another sensation, viz., a fear of making him angry, of offending him somehow, of displeasing him. Was this because his face had such a haughty expression? or because I, despising my own exterior, valued too highly the beautiful in others? or lastly (and most probably) was it only that this is a common sign of love?—but certain it is that I felt as much fear as affection. The first time Seriosha spoke to me, I was so overwhelmed by this sudden happiness that I became pale, blushed again, and was incapable of uttering a word. He had the bad habit of winking when he considered about anything, and of moving his nose and eyebrows at the same time. Everyone was of opinion that this habit spoiled his face, but I thought it so nice that, involuntarily I adopted the same habit, and a few days after my acquaintance with him, grandmama asked whether I had bad eyes as I winked like an owl. Never a word of love was said between us, but he felt his power over me, and unconsciously but tyrannically exercised it in our childish intercourse; I, though

longing with my whole heart to tell him all I felt, was too much afraid of him to be frank; I endeavoured to appear indifferent and careless, while I submitted myself to him. His influence seemed sometimes heavy and unbearable, but to escape from it was beyond my strength.

I think with sadness of this fresh, beautiful feeling of disinterested and boundless love, which died away without having ever been expressed, or having found a return.

It is strange how, while I was a child, I longed to be like grown-up people, and how often since the time that childhood has ended, I have wished to return to it again! Many times in my relation to Seriosha, this wish to resemble the grown-up people rudely checked my love, ready to expand, and compelled me to govern it. I was not only afraid of kissing him, taking his hand and saying how glad I was to see him, but I dreaded even so much as to call him Seriosha, but said "Sergius," as he was usually called in our house. Every expression of sensibility would have been an evidence of childishness, and one who indulged in it still a *baby*. Not yet having passed through those bitter experiences which enforce upon a later age circumspection and coldness,—I deprived myself of the pure delight of a fresh childlike inclination, for the stupid purpose of resembling grown-up people!

I met the Iwins in the anteroom, welcomed them, ran to grandmama and announced the fact of their arrival with an expression as though it ought to render the old lady thoroughly happy. Then, not turning my

eyes away from Seriosha, I conducted them to the drawing-room and eagerly followed each of his movements. When grandmama spoke to him and fixed on him her sharp glance, I experienced that mixed feeling of fear and hope which an artist must have when expecting from revered lips a judgment on his work.

The young tutor of the Iwins, "Herr Frost" went, on grandmama's permission, with us into the little back garden, sat down on a garden-bench, arranged his legs in an artistic attitude, put his brass-knobbed stick between them, and then, with the expression of a man thoroughly pleased with himself, he lighted his cigar.

Herr Frost was a German, but of a very different kind from our good Karl Iwanitsh: firstly, he spoke Russian correctly, and likewise French, although with a hard pronunciation; and enjoyed in general, particularly among ladies, the reputation of a learned man; secondly he wore reddish moustachoes, a large gold pin with a ruby on his black satin scarf, and very fashionable clothes; lastly he was young, had a handsome, self-satisfied face, and uncommonly fine muscular legs. It was evident that he attached the highest value to the latter privilege, thought them inestimable, particularly with regard to his relations with the fair sex, and consequently tried to exhibit them, whether standing or sitting, in the most favourable light. He was, in short, the type of a young German-Russian who wishes to be perfectly gentlemanlike and gallant.

In the little garden general merriment reigned. The game of robbers went on as well as possible; nevertheless one circumstance occurred which was nearly

the ruin of it. Seriosha was the robber, and pouncing on the travellers, he tumbled and knocked his leg so violently against a tree, that I thought the leg must be broken. In spite of my being the gensdarme and having consequently to catch him, I went up and asked compassionately whether it hurt him much. He got into a great passion at my behaviour, and with doubled fist and sinking voice, which shewed the pain he was suffering, exclaimed, "Well, what's the matter? Is this playing? Why don't you arrest me? Why don't you?" repeated he several times, glancing at Woloda and the elder Iwin, who, performing travellers, jumped and ran on the paths, and suddenly, with a scream and loud laughter, he threw himself on them to catch them.

I cannot express how this heroic behaviour delighted and captivated me; notwithstanding the severe pain, he not only did not cry, but even repressed the utterance of suffering, and did not for a moment lose sight of the game. Shortly after this occurrence, another boy, Ilinka Grap, joined our party; we went upstairs, and Seriosha gave me an opportunity of still more appreciating and delighting in his manly bravery and firmness of character. Ilinka was the son of a poor foreigner who had been formerly under some obligations to my grandpapa, and now thought it his indispensable duty to send his son to us as often as possible.

If he thought that our acquaintance would bestow any honours or satisfaction upon his son, he was entirely mistaken, because not only were we by no means friendly with Ilinka, but we scarcely ever noticed him, and then only when we wanted to laugh at him. He

was a boy of thirteen, thin, tall, pale, with a bird-like face and a good and tranquil expression.

He was poorly dressed, but always so strongly pomaded, that we affirmed that on warm days the pomade melted on his head and flowed down his neck. When I think of him now, I find that he was a very quiet, obliging, and good boy; but at that time he appeared to me a being so contemptible, that it was not worth thinking of him or even pitying him.

Upstairs we set ourselves to astonish each other with different gymnastic "tours de force." Ilinka looked at us with a faint smile of admiration, and when we proposed to him also to try some exercise, he refused, saying that he had not the least strength.

Seriosha was extremely charming; his face and eyes were glowing, he laughed continually, and surprised us with fun we had not seen before: he jumped over three chairs put together, tumbled over and over through the whole room, placed himself on his head, with legs aloft, on the summit of Tatitsheff's dictionaries, arranged by him as a sort of pedestal in the middle of the room, and then moved his legs with such comical rapidity that it was impossible not to burst out with laughter.

After this last trick he reflected, winked as usual, and with a very serious face went to Ilinka: "Try to do this, it is really not difficult." Grap, observing that the general attention was directed upon him, blushed, and with a hardly audible voice assured him that he could not do it.

"Well, what does he mean by doing nothing at all?

What a girl he is! it is absolutely necessary that he should stand on his head."

And Seriosha took his hand.

"Directly, directly on your head," shouted we all, running to Ilinka and dragging him to the dictionaries, although he grew pale and was visibly frightened.

"Leave me alone! you are tearing my jacket!" cried the unhappy victim; but his exclamations of despair only the more encouraged us: we were dying with laughter—the green jacket cracked in all its joints.

Woloda and the elder Iwin caught his head and placed him on the dictionaries; Seriosha and I seized the poor boy's thin legs which he moved in different directions, stripped them to the knees, and with rude laughter held them upright. The youngest Iwin sustained the equilibrium of the whole body.

It so happened that, after unmeasured laughter, suddenly all were silent, and nothing was to be heard in the room but the heavy breathing of the unfortunate Grap. At that moment I felt by no means sure whether all this were indeed so very comical and pleasant.

"Now that's a boy!" said Seriosha, clapping his hands.

Ilinka replied nothing, but, trying to free himself, made such desperate efforts with his legs in different directions, that suddenly his foot hit violently against Seriosha's eye, who, covering with his hand the eye from which the tears poured forth, let go the leg of Ilinka and struck him with all his might. Ilinka no longer kept up his leg, but sank almost lifeless on the floor, and, suffocated with tears, stammered out the words—

"Why do you tyrannise over me so?"

The miserable figure of poor Ilinka, with streaming eyes, dishevelled hair, and turned-up trousers, from beneath which dirty boots were visible, smote our hearts; we were silent, and tried in vain to smile.

Seriosha recovered the first. "That's a girl, a baby!" said he, touching slightly his foot; "it is impossible to have a joke with him. Well! enough, get up!"

"I tell you that you are a wicked boy," said Ilinka, turning bitterly away and sobbing.

"Oh! oh! strike me with the heel, and then still spiteful!" screamed Seriosha, seizing a dictionary and throwing it at the head of the unfortunate boy, who thought not even of seeking refuge, but only sheltered his head with his hands.

"There's for you, there's for you!—beat him if he doesn't understand fun! Let us go downstairs," said Seriosha laughing unnaturally.

I looked with compassion at the miserable creature who lay on the floor, hiding his face on the dictionary, and sobbing so that a little more and he had seemed dying in convulsions.

"O Sergius!" said I, "why did you do this?"

"And you too! *I* did not cry this afternoon, I hope, when I knocked my leg almost so as to break it."

"Yes, that is true," thought I. "Ilinka is nothing but a whining fellow; but Seriosha—he *is* a boy—*he* is really a boy!"

I did not even imagine that the poor one suffered far less from bodily pain than from the thought that five boys, whom he perhaps liked very well, should thus

unite without the least reason, first to hurt and then despise him.

I can by no means explain to myself the cruelty of my behaviour.

Why did I not go to protect, to comfort him? What had become of the compassion which made me cry aloud at the sight of a young bird that had fallen from its nest, or a puppy which they took away to throw over the wall, or a hen which the cook killed to make soup of?

Was it possible that this good feeling was subdued in me by my love for Seriosha, and the wish to shine before him like a brave boy as he was? How contemptible were then this love and this wish! They produced the only dark spots on the pages of my youthful recollections.

CHAPTER XX.

PREPARATIONS TO RECEIVE GUESTS.

TO judge from the extraordinary activity in the pantry, from the shining cleanness, giving a new and festal appearance to things long known to me in a less resplendent condition in the drawing-room and saloon, and particularly from the arrival of some musicians, whom the prince Iwan could not have sent for nothing, no small number of guests must be expected in the evening.

At the noise of each carriage which passed the house, I ran to the window, put my hands up to my temples, and looked with impatient curiosity into the street.

At last a carriage stopped at the entrance of the house, and I, fully believing that this must be the Iwins, who had promised to come early, ran downstairs to meet them in the hall.

But instead of the Iwins, I beheld, behind the hand of the footman who opened the door, two female figures, the one tall, in a blue cloak trimmed with marten's fur, the other short, and wrapped in a green shawl, from beneath which only two little feet, stuck in fur boots, were visible.

Without paying the least attention to my presence in the hall, although I thought it my duty on the ap-

pearance of these two persons to bow to them, the little one went silently to the elder and stopped before her.

The tall lady untied the shawl which covered entirely the head of the little one, unbuttoned the cloak which enveloped her, and when the footman had received these articles and taken off her furred overboots, out of this formless chrysalis came a charming girl of twelve years of age, in a short muslin dress, white trousers, and elegant black satin shoes. Around her white neck she wore a narrow black velvet riband; and her head was covered with fair curls, which in front suited so perfectly her beautiful face, and behind, her bare neck and shoulders, that I would not have believed from anybody, not even from Karl Iwanitsh, that they only fell so nicely because, since the morning, they had been screwed up in bits of the Moscow newspaper and afterwards burnt with a hot iron. To me it seemed as though she must have been born with these curls.

The most prominent feature in her face was the uncommonly large half-veiled eyes, which formed a strange but charming contrast to the small mouth.

Her lips were closed, and her eyes looked so earnest that the general expression of her face was such that you did not expect a smile from it, and when at last a smile came, it was all the more pleasing.

Trying to remain unobserved, I slipped in at the door of the saloon, and thought it necessary to step to and fro, feigning to be absorbed in thought and totally unconscious of the arrival of guests.

When the ladies had advanced to the middle of the saloon, I seemed suddenly to arouse myself, and told

them that grandmama was in the drawing-room. Mrs. Walachin, whose face pleased me extremely, particularly because it had a great likeness to that of her daughter Sonitshka, kindly stroked my head.

Grandmama seemed greatly pleased to see Sonitshka; she invited her to come near, arranged one of her curls which fell over her brow, and, looking earnestly at her, said, "What a charming child!"

Sonitshka smiled, blushed, and looked indeed so charming, that I too blushed when looking at her.

"I hope you will amuse yourself here, my love," said grandmama, lifting her dear little face by the chin. "Pray be as merry and dance as much as you can."

"Here we have already one lady and two beaux," added she, turning to Mrs. Walachin, and tendering her hand to me.

This approximation was so agreeable to me that I blushed again.

Feeling that my embarrassment was increasing, and hearing the noise of carriages approaching, I thought it wise to retire. In the hall I found the princess Kornakoff with a son, and an almost incredible number of daughters. They had all the same face, just like the mother, and were very ugly; not one of them arrested my attention. Taking off their cloaks and boas, they all talked at once with thin voices, busying themselves and laughing at something—probably that there were so many of them.

Etienne was a boy of fifteen, tall, plump, with a meagre face, hollow blueish eyes, and for his age hideously large hands and feet. He was awkward, had

a disagreeable and nervous voice, but seemed highly pleased with himself, and was, according to my ideas, just like what a boy would be who was habitually beaten with a rod.

We stood a considerable length of time before each other, and without saying a word, made a mutual examination.

When the dresses of all the sisters had rushed by, I, in order somehow to begin a conversation, asked whether it had not been very close in the carriage.

"I don't know," answered he negligently, "I never go inside the carriage—I instantly feel sick, and mama knows that. When we drive somewhere in the evening I always sit on the coach-box, and that's pleasant, you see every thing. Philip gives me the reins and sometimes the whip, then the passengers sometimes get—you know—" added he, with a significant gesture; "that's capital!"

"Your highness," said a footman, entering the hall, "Philip asks where you deigned to put the whip?"

"How, where I put it? I gave it to him."

"He says that you didn't."

"Well, I laid it on the lantern."

"Philip says you did not lay it on the lantern, and you had better say that you took it and tore it to pieces, and now Philip may answer for your pranks out of his own pocket," continued, in a more and more excited manner, the angry footman, who had the look of a serious and honest man, and seemed determined to sift the affair in defence of Philip.

From a feeling of delicacy I pretended not to remark

anything, and turned aside, but the footmen present drew nearer and gazed with approbation at the old servant.

"Hem! well—I did tear it to pieces," replied Etienne, shrinking from farther explanation; "I shall pay him for the whip—that's ridiculous," added he, approaching me and drawing me towards the drawing-room.

"No, excuse me, sir, how will you pay for it? I know the manner in which you are wont to pay;—to Maria Walericana you have already owed twenty kopeeks these eight months—to me also something for two years—to Peter"—

"Be silent! will you?" screamed the young prince, becoming pale with rage; "I shall tell all this."

"Tell all this, tell all this!" repeated the footman, "it is not fair, your highness," added he with a particular stress, whilst we entered the saloon, and he went with the ladies' wraps to the cloak-room.

"That's right," exclaimed some approving voice behind us in the hall.

Grandmama had a peculiar talent in employing with a certain tone, in certain cases, the pronoun of the second person plural and singular, in such a manner as to express her opinion of people.

When the young prince went up to her she said some words to him, addressed him with '*you*,' and looked at him with such a contemptuous expression, that had I been in his place it would have utterly perplexed me; but Etienne was evidently not a boy of this sort of composition; he not only paid no attention

to the reception of grandmama, but none even to her person in general, and bowed to the company at large if not very gracefully, at least without embarrassment.

Sonitshka occupied my whole attention. I recollect that, standing in the saloon with Etienne and Woloda, on a spot whence we could see Sonitshka and be also seen and heard by her, I talked with pleasure, and every word I said, which was according to my opinion either bold or comical, I uttered very loud, and with a glance towards the door of the drawing-room; but when we happened to remove and were no longer to be seen or heard by her, I became silent, and thought the conversation had ceased to be agreeable. The rooms were filled with people; in the number of which, as usual at children's parties, were some grown-up children, who wished to amuse themselves and dance, although they feigned to do it merely in order to give pleasure to the mistress of the house.

When the Iwins arrived, I felt, instead of the usual delight of meeting Seriosha, a secret anger that he should see Sonitshka, and be seen by her.

CHAPTER XXI.

BEFORE THE MAZURKA.

"WOLODA! it seems that we are going to dance here!" said Seriosha, coming from the drawing-room, and taking from his pocket a pair of new gloves; "I suppose it's necessary to put on gloves?"

"Dear me, what shall we do? We have no gloves," thought I, "and I must go upstairs to search." But although I searched in all the drawers, I found only, in one, our green travelling mittens, in another, one lilac glove, which could be of no use to me, first because it was very old and dirty, secondly, much too large for me, and principally, because the middle finger was wanting, which Karl Iwanitsh had cut off long ago to wear on a hurt nail.

However, I put the glove on my hand, looking seriously on the place of the middle finger, the edge of which was soiled with ink. "Oh! if Natalia Sawishna were here we should certainly have found gloves. It is impossible to go downstairs in this condition, because, if they ask me why I do not dance, what shall I say? And neither can I remain here, because they will fetch me directly. What *shall* I do?" said I, wringing my hands.

"What are you about here?" asked Woloda,

running into the room. "Go and engage a lady—dancing will begin directly."

"Woloda," said I, shewing the hand with two fingers thrust into one finger of the dirty glove, and with a voice expressive almost of despair—"Woloda, you did not think of this!"

"Of what?" said he impatiently; "oh! of gloves," added he indifferently, looking at my hand; "that's nothing, we must ask grandmama what she thinks of it;" and without further delay he sprang downstairs. The coolness with which he treated a subject which had seemed so important to me tranquillised me a little, and I hastened back to the drawing-room, completely forgetful of the unfortunate glove which covered my left hand.

Cautiously approaching grandmama's arm-chair, I asked in a whisper,

"Grandmama, what shall we do, we have no gloves?"

"What, my love?"

"We have no gloves," repeated I, bending close to her, and laying both my hands on the arm-chair.

"But what is that?" said she, suddenly seizing my left hand. "Look, my dear," continued she, turning to Madam Walachin, "see how smart that young man has made himself to dance with your daughter!"

Grandmama held my hand fast and looked seriously and inquiringly at those present, until the curiosity of all the guests being aroused, laughter became general.

I should have been enraged if Seriosha had been present to see this—I frowned for shame, and tried in vain to disengage my hand; but before Sonitshka, who laughed to such a degree that tears came into her

eyes and her curls danced around her lovely face, I did not feel humiliated. On the contrary, I understood that her laughter was only rather more loud and natural than satirical, and our laughing together and looking at each other seemed to make us sympathise. The episode with the glove, although it might have ended badly, gave me this advantage, it set me at my ease in the circle of guests, which was always most dreadful to me. I felt no longer any embarrassment in the saloon.

The sufferings of embarrassed people proceed from the uncertainty they feel respecting the opinion which others have of them; so soon as this opinion, whatever it may be, is clearly expressed, the suffering ceases.

How lovely Sonitshka was when she danced the quadrille as my *vis-à-vis* with the clumsy prince Etienne! How charmingly she smiled when, *en chaine*, she gave me her hand! How gracefully the curls moved around her head in the measure, and how naïvely she made the *jeté assemblé* with her little feet!

In the fifth figure, when my partner left me for the other side, and I, counting the measure, prepared to dance my solo, she shut her lips very seriously and looked in another direction.

But her fears for me were needless. I boldly made *chassé en avant, chassé en arrière glissade*—and at the moment when I had to go to her, I, with a funny movement, shewed her the glove with the two compressed fingers. She laughed heartily, and still more lovely was the movement of her tiny feet upon the parquetted floor.

I recollect even now how we formed a circle, and how she, without withdrawing her hand from mine, scratched her nose a little with her glove. All this is even yet before my eyes, and I still hear the quadrille from "Girl Duna," to the sounds of which all this occurred.

I danced the second quadrille with Sonitshka. When I sat down with her, during the pause, I felt exceedingly awkward, and decidedly did not know what to speak about. When my silence began to last too long, I was afraid she would take me for a stupid boy, and I decided at any price to counteract that opinion.

"*Vous êtes une habitante de Moscou?*" asked I; and, after an affirmative answer, I continued: *et moi je n'ai encore jamais fréquenté la capitale,*" counting particularly upon the effect of the word *fréquenté.* I felt, however, that, although this introduction was brilliant and sufficed to shew my deep knowledge of the French language, I should not be capable of keeping up the conversation in the same style.

Our turn for dancing was not yet arrived, and silence was renewed. I looked at her with anxiety, wishing to know what impression I had produced, and hoping that she might come to my help. "Where did you find that laughable glove?" asked she suddenly, and this question afforded me great satisfaction and relief. I declared that the glove belonged to Karl Iwanitsh himself, and I continued to speak somewhat ironically about his person, how comical he used to look in his red cap, or how once, in a green coat, he fell from his horse plump into a pond —and so on.

The quadrille passed rapidly away.

All was right, but why did I speak ironically of Karl Iwanitsh? Could I possibly have lost the good opinion of Sonitshka by describing him with all the love and esteem which I truly felt for him?

When the quadrille was over, Sonitshka said, "thank you," with a lovely expression she might have worn had I really done her some good. I was delighted—I hardly remembered myself in my joy, and I could not understand whence came to me this ease, confidence, and even boldness. "There is nothing in the world which can confuse me," thought I, carelessly wandering about the saloon; "I am ready for anything."

Seriosha requested me to be his *vis-à-vis:* "Very well," said I, "although I have as yet no partner, but I shall find one." Glancing around the saloon with a decided look, I observed that all the ladies were engaged except one, a tall young girl standing at the door of the drawing-room. A grown-up young man approached her, probably for the same purpose of engaging her, and was but two steps off, while I stood at the opposite end of the saloon. In a trice, gliding over the parquetted floor, did I pass the space dividing me from her, and with a brave and firm voice I asked her hand for the quadrille. The young lady, smiling with an air of protection, gave me her hand, and the tall young man was left without a partner. I had so much the consciousness of my strength that I paid not the least attention to his anger, but I learned later that he asked somebody who was this awkward, untidy boy, who passed him thus and took away his lady.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MAZURKA.

THE same young man was afterwards one in the first couple of a mazurka. He leaped from his place, took the hand of his partner, and instead of executing the *pas de Basques* Mimi taught us, he ran simply forward, and arriving at a corner, stopped, spread out his legs, turned on his heels, and jumping, ran on again. As I had found no partner I sat on the arm of grandmama's chair, thus reasoning: "What is he doing? This is not as Mimi taught us; and there are the Iwins, Etienne—all dancing in the same way without *pas de Basques*—Ah! and our Woloda—he too adopts the new fashion, and not badly. There is Sonitshka the lovely one—there she comes"—I felt immensely happy. The mazurka came to an end; some of the guests were already taking leave of grandmama, who was evidently tired, but nevertheless assured them she felt vexed at their early departure; the servants were slipping between the lines of the dancers carrying plates and trays, the musicians carelessly played for the thirteenth time the same tune, when the young lady with whom I had danced before, and who was now just about to execute a figure of the dance, on seeing me, smiled kindly, and

led to me Sonitshka and one of the innumerable princesses, asking me—*Rose or Hortie?*

"Ah, you here!" said grandmama, turning round in her arm-chair. "Go, my love, go."

Although I would much rather have hidden my head beneath the arm-chair at that moment, than come away from it, how could I refuse? I got up, said '*Rose*,' and looked at Sonitshka. I had not yet had time to compose myself, when a hand in a white glove laid itself on mine, and the princess, with a pleased smile, stepped forth, not even suspecting that I had not the least idea what I was to do with my legs.

I knew that *pas de Basques* was out of place, and would entirely compromise me; but the well-known sounds of the mazurka acting upon my ear and imparting the equally well-known direction to the acoustic nerves, which, in their turn, communicated a corresponding movement to the feet, I, quite involuntarily, and to the astonishment of the spectators, began to execute on tiptoe the fatal *pas* which I had been taught.

So long as we went straight on, all was still pretty right, but when it was time to turn, I saw that I must prepare to arrest my course; so to avoid appearing awkward, I stopped and intended to imitate the '*wheel*,' which the young man had before so well executed.

But at the same moment that I spread my legs and was about to jump, the princess, turning hastily round, looked with an expression of stupified curiosity and astonishment at my legs. This look ruined me. I was confused to such a degree, that, instead of dancing, moved my legs on the same spot in the strangest

way, with neither time nor form, and at last stopped entirely.

All gazed at me, some with curiosity, some with astonishment, others with irony, and yet others with compassion. Grandmama alone seemed perfectly indifferent.

"You must not dance if you don't know the step," said the angry voice of papa close to my ear; and slightly pushing me aside, he took my partner's hand, and accomplished the figures with her to the general admiration of the spectators, and led her to her place. The mazurka was at an end.

Ah me! why was I punished so dreadfully?

* * * * * * *

All despise me, and will for ever despise me. The way to everything is shut for me—to friendship, love, honours—all have I lost!

Why did Woloda make me signs, which all saw and which could not help me? Why did this disgusting princess look at my legs? Why did Sonitshka—she is a darling—but why did she smile at that moment?

Why did papa blush and take my hand? Is it possible that even he was ashamed of me?

Oh, this is dreadful! Alas! If mama were here she would not have blushed for her Nikolinka! And my imagination was led away by this dear image. I remembered the meadow before our house, the high lime-trees of the garden, the clean pond in which the ducks swam, the blue sky upon which white clouds were dispersed, the scent of the heaps of fresh hay; these and a great many other quiet pleasant recollections floated through my thoughts.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AFTER THE MAZURKA.

AT supper, the young man before mentioned sat down at the children's table, and treated me with particular attention, which would have flattered my self-love, if, after the occurrence just related, I could have been sensible of anything else.

But the young man seemed determined at any cost to cheer me up; he joked, called me a "bold boy," and as none of the old people were looking at us, began to help me to wine, first from one bottle and then another, and forced me to drink it off directly.

At the conclusion of the supper, when the servant filled the fourth of a glass of champagne for me, and the young man ordered him to fill it up, and then bade me empty it at one draught, I felt an agreeable warmth spread through my whole body, also a grateful friendship for my kind protector, and began to laugh heartily at something or other. Suddenly, from the saloon, the music of the 'Grosvater'* was heard, and everybody ran from the table. My friendship with the young man had lived its time; he went to the old people, and I, not afraid of following him, went to listen

* An old-fashioned dance.—*Translator.*

what Madam Walachin was talking about with her daughter.

"Only half-an-hour more!" said Sonitshka imploringly.

"Impossible, my angel!"

"But for my sake, please!" continued she tenderly.

"Well, could you be happy to-morrow if I were ill?" asked the mother, and was so incautious as to smile.

"Oh, you consent, we shall stay after all!" exclaimed Sonitshka, jumping for joy.

"What can one do with you? Go and dance—and there is a cavalier for you," said she, perceiving me.

Sonitshka gave me her hand and we ran to the saloon. The wine, and the presence and gaiety of Sonitshka, made me forget completely the unfortunate conclusion of the mazurka.

I made the most astonishing manœuvres with my legs: now imitating a horse, I ran in a short trot, lifting proudly my legs, now trampling like a sheep that is angry at a dog, and with all that laughed heartily, utterly regardless of what impression it would produce upon the spectators.

Sonitshka likewise laughed unceasingly, at our turning in a circle, at an old lady who, lifting slowly her feet, shewed evidently the great trouble it gave her to do so, and she nearly died of laughter when I jumped almost to the ceiling to exhibit my skill.

Passing a mirror in grandmama's boudoir I glanced at myself; my face was in a perspiration, my hair disordered; the tuft on the top stood more upright than

ever; but the general expression was so happy, good, and healthy, that I was pleased with myself.

"If I were always as I am now," thought I, "I could yet please."

But when I again glanced at the face of my partner, and saw how there, besides the expression of happiness, goodness, and health which had pleased me in my own, there was so enchanting and fresh a beauty—I felt angry with myself; I understood how stupid I was in hoping to awaken the attention of such a wonderful creature.

I could not hope for reciprocity—not even think of it yet; my heart was, without this, overflowing with happiness. I did not understand that the feeling of love which filled my soul with satisfaction, could require a still greater happiness, or ask for more than that it might never end. I felt perfect ease. My heart beat like that of a dove, the blood continually rushing back to it, and I would fain have wept.

When we passed through the hall and looked at a little dark storeroom beneath the staircase, I thought, "What a happiness would it be if I could pass my whole life with her in this dark corner, and if nobody could know that we were there!"

"It is a very pleasant evening, is it not?" asked I, with a soft trembling voice, and hastening my steps, afraid as much of what I had expressed as of what I meant to express.

"Yes, very!" replied she, turning her face to me with so kind an expression that I ceased to fear. I went on—

"Particularly after supper—but if you could know how I regret" (I would have said how miserable I am at) "your going, and that we shall see each other no more—"

"Why not see each other?" said she, looking earnestly at the corners of her pocket-handkerchief, and passing her fingers over a latticed screen near which we passed. "Every Tuesday and Friday I go with mama on the Iwerskoi. I suppose you likewise take walks?"

"I shall certainly ask for it next Tuesday, and if they won't take me, I shall run alone—even without my hat. I know the way."

"Do you know what just enters my head?" asked Sonitshka suddenly. "I say to some boys who often come to us, *thou;*—shall we say *thou* likewise? Wilt thou?" added she, inclining her head towards me and looking straight into my eyes.

At this minute a more lively part of the *Grosvater* began. "Give me—your—hand," said I, when I thought the music and the noise might overpower my words.

"*Thy* hand, and not *your* hand," replied Sonitshka, smiling. The dance was over, and I had not once succeeded in saying *thou*, although I did not cease thinking of phrases in which this pronoun could be employed several times. I wanted courage to say so.

"Wilt *thou?*"—"*thy* hand"—sounded continually in my ears, and occasioned something like intoxication; I saw and heard nothing but Sonitshka. I saw how they took her curls, laid them behind the ears, uncovering thus part of the forehead and the temples which

I had not yet seen; how they wrapped her up in the green shawl so thoroughly that nothing remained visible but the point of her nose; I observed that if she, with her rosy little fingers, had not made a small opening near the mouth, she would have been suffocated; and I saw how she, on the staircase, leaving her mother's arm, quickly turned round to us, nodded, and disappeared through the doorway.

Woloda, the Iwins, the young prince, and I, all were in love with Sonitshka, and standing on the staircase, accompanied her with our eyes. To whom she nodded in particular I don't know, but at that moment I firmly believed it was to me.

Taking leave of the Iwins, I talked very freely, even coldly with Seriosha, and then shook hands.

If he understood that with this day he lost my love and his power over me, he probably regretted it, although he tried to appear completely indifferent.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN BED.

"HOW could I so long and so passionately love Seriosha?" thought I, lying in bed. "No, he never understood, appreciated, nor deserved my love. And Sonitshka! What a treasure she is! 'Wilt *thou?*' '*Thy* hand!'"

I crept underneath my pillows, fancied to myself her lovely face, covered my head with the counterpane, tucked it under on all sides, and when wholly covered, I lay quiet, enjoying the agreeable warmth, and was soon absorbed in soft dreams and recollections.

Staring with immoveable looks into the lining of my counterpane, I saw her as clearly before me as I did in reality an hour ago; I talked to her in my thoughts, and this conversation, although in fact it had no sense, gave me unspeakable delight, because *thou*, *thine*, *for thee*, *to thee*, resounded in it incessantly. These dreams were so lively that I could not sleep on account of the sweet emotion, and felt the desire to communicate to somebody the abundance of my happiness.

"Darling!" said I almost aloud, while turning to the other side. "Woloda, are you asleep?"

"No!" replied he with a sleepy voice, "what's the matter?"

"I am in love, Woloda—decidedly in love with Sonitshka!"

"Well, and what else?" answered he stretching himself.

"Ah Woloda, you cannot imagine what I feel. Just now I lay quite covered with the counterpane, and I so clearly, so clearly saw her, talked to her—that it is quite extraordinary! And do you know, besides, when I lay and thought of her—I don't know why, but I felt suddenly so sad that I almost cried!"

Woloda moved.

"One thing only I wish for," continued I, "that—that I could always be with her, always see her—nothing more. You are in love too,—confess the truth, Woloda!"

How strange that I wished all to be in love with Sonitshka, and all to tell me that they were.

"Is it so with you?" said Woloda, turning his face to me; "it may be."

"You cannot sleep," exclaimed I, seeing by his sparkling eyes that he too was far from sleepy, "yet you cover yourself so"—(and I pulled his bedclothes)—"let us speak of her instead. Is she not a treasure? such a treasure, that if she were to say to me, 'Nikolinka, leap out of the window,' or 'spring into the fire,' I would say, 'I will do it directly and with pleasure.' Oh, what a treasure she is!"

I went on representing her again to my imagination, and, in order to enjoy this image, quickly turned round on the other side, and, concealing my head under the pillows, muttered, "Oh, I want to cry, Woloda!"

"What a fool you are!" said he, laughing slightly; and then, after a little silence, added, "I am not like you; I think I would at first only sit and talk with her."

"Ah, then, you are in love too?" interrupted I.

"And then," continued Woloda, smiling tenderly, "kiss her fingers, her eyes, her lips, her nose, her feet—kiss her."

"Absurd!" exclaimed I from beneath the pillows.

"You don't understand anything," said Woloda with contempt.

"No, *I* understand, but *you don't* understand, and you speak absurdities," replied I with tears.

"Well, there is nothing to cry about. She is only a girl."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE LETTER.

ON the 16th of April, nearly six months after the day which has just been described, papa entered our schoolroom, and told us that on that very night we should have to start with him for our country seat. I felt a certain pang in my heart at this news, and my thoughts turned immediately to mama.

The cause for so unexpected a departure was the following letter:

"PETROFFSKA, 12th April.

"But just now, at ten o'clock in the evening, do I receive your kind letter of the 3rd of April, and, according to my custom, I answer it immediately. Fedor brought it yesterday from town, but as it was late, he did not give it to Mimi till this morning, and Mimi, in consequence of my being unwell, has detained it from me all day. I have been a little feverish, and to confess the truth, this is the fourth day of my indisposition.

"But pray don't be uneasy; I feel pretty well again, and if Iwan Wasilitsh will allow me, I think of getting up to-morrow.

"On Friday last I went with the children for a drive, but close to the opening on the great road, on that little bridge of which I had always been afraid, the horses

sank into the mud; well, the day being beautiful, I thought of walking up the road until the carriage should be dragged out. When we had reached the chapel, I felt very tired and sat down to rest; and thus, while the necessary help was procured to get the carriage out, half-an-hour passed. I then felt cold, particularly my feet, because I had only thin boots, and they had been wet through. After dinner I had alternate shivering and heat, but continued to proceed according to our daily routine.

"After tea I sat down at the piano to play a duet with Lubotshka (you would be astonished to hear the progress she has made), but imagine my surprise when I found I could not count the measure! Several times I began to count, but felt decidedly confused in my head, and heard strange noises in my ears. I went on 'one—two—three'—then suddenly, 'eight—fifteen,' and, moreover, I felt myself that I was talking nonsense and could not help it. At last Mimi came to my help and forced me to go to bed. In this manner commenced my illness, which arose from my own fault. The following day I had a considerable fever, and our good Iwan Wasilitsh came, and has not left us since, and promises soon to restore me to the world.

"What a wonderful old man is this Iwan Wasilitsh! While I had fever and delirium, he sat the whole night at my bedside without closing his eyes; and now, as he knows I am writing, he is sitting with the girls in the Divanoi,* and I hear from my bedroom how he tells

* A room where divans are placed along the walls.—*Translator.*

them German stories, and how they, while listening to him, burst out laughing.

"*La belle Flamande*, as you called her, is my guest now for the second week, as her mother went somewhere to pay a visit,—and she shows me by her attention the sincerest attachment. She also tells me her most secret affairs. With her beautiful face, her good heart and her youth, she might have become an excellent girl under different circumstances; but, in the society in which she lives, according to her own account, she will be lost. The idea crossed my mind, that if I had not so many children of my own, it would have been a good deed to adopt her.

"Lubotshka intended to write to you for herself, but she has torn up three sheets of paper, and says, 'I know what a ridiculer papa is; if he find one single fault, he will show it to every body.' Katenka is always charming—Mimi also is good and tiresome.

"Now let us speak of serious matters. You write to me that your affairs do not go well this winter, and that you want to break into the revenues of Chabaroffka. It seems strange to me that you actually ask my consent; what belongs to me, does it belong less to you? You are so good, my friend, that from a fear of grieving me you conceal the real state of things—but I guess you have lost a great deal at play, and that you are afraid this will make me rather angry; but if you can only arrange this affair, I shall not think much of it, and you need not trouble your mind upon the subject. I have accustomed myself not to rely at all, on behalf of the children, upon your gains, nor—excuse me for saying so—

upon your fortune. Your gains give me as little pleasure as your losses grief. I grieve only over your unhappy passion for gambling itself, which bereaves me of a part of your tender affection, and obliges me to tell you such bitter truths as now, which is, God knows how painful to me. I do not cease praying to Him to preserve us from —not poverty—(what is poverty?) but from the terrible necessity, in case the interests of the children, which I am called upon to protect, should come into collision with ours. Up to this time God has heard my prayers; you have never yet overstepped a certain limit, beyond which we should be obliged either to sacrifice property that does not any longer appertain to us, but to the children or . . . . . it is horrible to think of, but that dreadful misfortune always threatens us. Yes, this is a heavy cross, which God has given us both to carry.

"You write farther about the children, and come back to our former quarrel, asking my consent to place them at a boarding-school. You know my objection to such an education. I don't know, dear, whether we shall agree, but in any case I beseech you, for love of me, promise that while I am alive—and after my death, if it should please God to separate us—this shall never be done!

"You write also that it is indispensable for you to go to Petersburg on account of our affairs. The Lord be with you! go and return as soon as possible. Without you, we all feel lonely.

"Spring has set in beautifully; we have the doors of the balcony open, the path to the orangery is perfectly dry, the peach-trees are in full bloom; in a few places

only is there a little snow remaining; the swallows arrive, and to-day Lubotshka brought me the first flowers. The doctor says that in about three days I shall be well again, and able to take the open air and enjoy the sun of April. Good-bye, my friend—don't be alarmed, I beseech you, either on account of my illness or of your losses; terminate the affair as quickly as possible, and return to us with the children for the summer: I make wonderful plans for the manner of passing it, and I want only you to realize them."

The following part of the letter was written in French in an uncertain and strange hand, on another piece of paper. I transcribe it word for word:—

"Do not believe what I wrote to you about my illness; nobody imagines how very serious it is; I alone know that I shall not leave my bed again. Do not delay a minute to come with the children. Perhaps I may be allowed yet to embrace and bless them; this is my last wish. I know what a terrible blow this will be to you, but sooner or later you must have heard it from me or from others. Let us try to bear this misfortune with firmness, and hope in the mercy of God. Let us submit to His will. Do not think that what I write is an error of my sick imagination; on the contrary, I am perfectly clear at this moment and very tranquil. Do not comfort yourself with the false hope that these are the unreal, confused feelings of a cowardly soul. No, I feel, I know—I know it, because God deigned to reveal it to me—that I have not very long to live. Will my love for you and the children cease with my life? I know that this is impossible. I ex-

perience it much too strongly at this moment to be capable of a belief, that this feeling, which constitutes a part of my existence, should ever vanish. My soul cannot be without its love for you, and I already know that it will exist eternally for this reason, that such a feeling as my love could never have been awakened were it not to last for ever. I shall no more be with you, but I firmly believe that my love will never forsake you; and this thought is so great a comfort to me that I tranquilly and without fear expect approaching death. I am calm, and God knows that I ever looked, and do look upon death as upon the passage to a better life. But why do tears blind my eyes? Why must the children lose a mother's love? Why must you experience such a heavy and unexpected blow? Why must I die, when your love made life so inexpressibly happy to me?

"But His holy will be done!

"I can no longer write, from tears. It may be that I shall see you no more. I thank you, my invaluable friend, for all the happiness with which you have surrounded me in this life; I shall soon myself pray God to reward you. Farewell, dearest! Remember that if I am no longer here, my love will nowhere, and never abandon you! Farewell, Woloda; farewell, my angel! farewell, my Benjamin—my Nikolinka! Is it possible that they ever will forget me?"—

Together with this letter came a French note from Mimi, which contained the following:

"The sad circumstances of which she has written to you, are but too well confirmed by the words of the

doctor. Yesterday evening she ordered the letter to be posted directly. Thinking that she said so in delirium, I waited till this morning, intending then to seal and send it. Hardly had I done so when Natalia Nikolaewna asked me what I did with the letter, and said I should burn it if not yet sent away. She speaks continually about it, and says 'it will kill you.' Do not delay your departure if you wish to see the angel before she leaves us. Excuse this scribble. I have not slept for three nights. You know how I love her!"

Natalia Sawishna, who passed the whole night of the 11th of April at mama's bedside, told me afterwards that having written the first part of the letter, mama laid it on the table next to her, and then slumbered.

"I myself," related Natalia Sawishna, "it must be confessed, fell asleep in the arm-chair, and my knitting fell from my hands. Suddenly, towards one o'clock in the night, I heard that she was talking; I opened my eyes, and looked at her;—my darling was sitting up in bed, with joined hands and streams of tears rushing from her eyes. 'Thus, then, it is all over!' said she, and hid her face in her hands.

"I sprang to my feet, and asked her what was the matter.

"'Ah, Natalia Sawishna, if you could know what I have just seen!'"

"But however much I asked, she never would say more; she only ordered me to give her the letter—wrote something further, and said it was to be sent off directly. From that moment it went worse and worse!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

WHAT AWAITED US IN THE VILLAGE.

ON the 15th of April we leaped from the carriage at the entrance-hall of the house at Petroffska. From Moscow papa was preoccupied, and when Woloda asked him, "whether mama were ill?" he looked sadly at him and nodded in the affirmative. During the journey he visibly grew more composed; but as we approached the house his face assumed a more and more melancholy expression, and when, getting out from the carriage, he asked Foka, who was breathless with running, "Where is Natalia Nikolaewna?" his voice trembled and his eyes were full of tears. The good old Foka first turned his looks sadly upon us, and then cast them down; next, opening the door of the hall and turning away, he said: "It is the sixth day that she has not left her bed."

Milka, who (as we learned afterwards) had not ceased to whine from the day when mama fell ill, leaped joyfully up to papa with sounds of welcome and licked his hands; but papa pushed him aside and went into the drawing-room, from that to the *divanoi*,* whence a door led to the bedroom. The nearer he came to the latter, the more was agitation visible in all his movements.

* The tea-room, with couches along the walls.

Entering the *divanoi* he went on tiptoe, hardly breathing, and made the sign of the cross before he took resolution to turn the handle of the door. At the same moment Mimi, with disordered hair and eyes red from weeping, came hastily from the corridor.

"Ah! Peter Alexandritsh!" said she in a whisper, with a sincere expression of despair; and, observing that papa wanted to open the door, she whispered scarce audibly—

"Not here—this door is locked; come in from the other side."

Oh, how dreadfully all this worked upon my imagination, excited by grief and terrible forebodings!

We went to the other side; in the corridor there came to welcome us the servant Akim, who formerly used to amuse us with his grimaces, but at this moment he not only seemed to me anything but comical, but nothing struck me so painfully as the sight of his thoughtlessly indifferent face. In the maidservant's room, through which we had to pass, two maids sitting at their work rose to salute us with such a sad expression that I felt quite overwhelmed.

Passing still through Mimi's room, papa opened the door of the bedroom, and we entered. On the right hand were two windows covered with shawls; Natalia Sawishna sat close to them, with spectacles on her nose, mending stockings; she did not come to kiss us as she used to do, but only rose, looked at us through her spectacles, and her tears began to flow. I did not like that all, at the first sight of us, began to cry, while they were tranquil before.

To the left stood the bed behind a screen; in the great arm-chair slumbered the doctor; near the bed stood a young, fair-haired, and remarkably beautiful girl in a white morning wrapper, and applied ice to the head of mama, whom I could not yet see. This girl was *La belle Flamande*, of whom mama had written, and who afterwards played so important a part in the life of our family. When we entered she disengaged one of her hands, adjusted the plaits of the dress upon her bosom, and whispered, "She is insensible." I felt the deepest grief at this moment, but nevertheless I observed every little incident.

It was almost dark in the room, very hot, and there was a mixed scent of mint, eau-de-cologne, camomile, and Hoffman's drops. This last so strongly impressed me, that if I now hear of it, or merely think of it, my imagination instantly carries me back to the dark close room, and I witness again the minutest details of these dreadful moments.

The eyes of mama were open, but she did not see us. Oh, never shall I forget that frightful look—it expressed so great an amount of suffering!

We were led away.

When, later, I asked Natalia Sawishna about mama's last moments, she told me the following.

"After you were led away she struggled still a long while, my beloved one, just as if something tried to strangle her; then she laid her head on the pillow and slept so quietly, so softly, like an angel from heaven. I just went out to ask why they did not bring the beverage, and as I re-entered, my darling cast off an

dragged about the bedclothes, and called your papa to her; he stooped over her, but the strength failed her already to say what she wanted; she only opened her lips and groaned, 'My God! my Lord! Children! children!' I would fain have run to fetch you, but Iwan Wasilitsch stopped me, saying that it would still more excite her: it was better not. She then lifted up her hands and dropped them again. What she meant by this, God alone knows. I think that by this gesture she blessed you who were out of sight. God did not grant her to see her children before her end. Then she raised herself—my love—my darling—did *so* with her hands, and suddenly exclaimed in a voice that I cannot bear to think of, 'Mother of God, do not forsake them!'

"Then the pain mounted to her heart; and from her eyes it was visible that she suffered dreadfully, poor dear! She sank on the pillows, tore the bedclothes with her teeth, and her tears flowed, my love—"

"Well, and then?" asked I.

Natalia Sawishna could say no more—she turned away and cried bitterly.

Mama expired in terrible agonies.

CHAPTER XXVII.

GRIEF.

THE following day, late in the evening, I wanted once more to look at her; I conquered the involuntary sense of fear, gently opened the door, and went on tiptoe into the saloon.

In the middle of the saloon, on a table, stood the coffin; all around wax-candles were burning on high silver candelabra; in a remote corner sat the chanter, who in a low monotonous voice read the psalms. I stopped at the door and looked; but my eyes were so weak with weeping, and my nerves so depressed, that I could distinguish nothing; all the objects melted strangely into one mass, the candles, the brocade, the velvet, the great candelabra, the pink satin cushion covered with lace, the crown of flowers, the cap with ribands, and something of a transparent wax colour. I mounted on a chair to be able to see her face, but at the spot where I should find it, I beheld again that pale, yellow, transparent object. I could not believe that this was her face. I stood looking at it attentively, and by-and-bye I recognised the well-known beloved features. I shuddered with horror when I convinced myself that it was she. Why were these shut eyes so deep sunk in? Whence this dreadful paleness, and the black spot on one

cheek underneath the transparent skin? Why was the expression of the whole face so severe and cold? Why were the lips so white, and their outline so beautiful, so grand, and expressive of such supernatural tranquillity, that, looking at them, a cold shudder crept over my hair and my back?

I looked, and felt an irrepressible, incomprehensible power compelling me to fix my eyes upon this lifeless face. I could not turn away, and my imagination represented me pictures of blooming life and happiness. I forgot that the corpse which was lying before me, and at which I gazed unconsciously as on *a thing* having nought in common with my dreams, was *she*. I fancied I saw her now in this, now in that place, living, happy, smiling—then suddenly some well-known feature in the face at which I was staring, struck me; I remembered the terrible reality, shuddered, but could not turn my eyes away.

And again the dreams took the place of reality, and again reality chased away the dreams. The knowledge of reality vanished likewise, and I forgot everything.

I don't know how long I remained in this condition, I don't know either how it was; I only know that I lost for a while the consciousness of my existence, and experienced something of a vague, but grand and sweet, yet at the same time sad delight. It may be that, ascending to a better world, her beautiful soul looked down with grief at that one in which she left us; she saw my sorrow, and pitying me, came on the wings of love, with a heavenly smile of compassion, back to the earth to console and bless me.

The door creaked, and in came the chanter who was to relieve the other. This noise awakened me, and my first thought was, that seeing me standing on the chair in a position which had nothing affecting, he might take me for an unfeeling boy, who stood on the chair only out of mere curiosity; I therefore made the sign of the cross, inclined myself, and wept. Remembering now my impressions, I find that the moments of self-forgetfulness alone were the real grief. Before and after the burial I did not cease to cry and to appear sad; but I feel conscience-stricken when I recollect this grief, because in it was mixed constantly something of self-love; either a wish to shew that I was yet more afflicted than the rest; or an interest that I took in knowing the effect produced by me upon others; or a useless curiosity which forced me to make observations on the bonnet of Mimi, or on the faces of those present. I despised myself for not feeling grief quite exclusively, and tried to conceal it from everybody; therefore my sadness was insincere and unnatural. Besides, I felt some delight at knowing I was unhappy, and endeavoured to awaken the consciousness of unhappiness; and this egotistic feeling, more than anything else, destroyed in me the sincerity of grief.

I slept that night tranquilly and soundly, as is usual after strong affliction, and awakened with dried-up tears and quieted nerves. At ten o'clock we were called to assist at the requiem which preceded the burial.

The room was filled with peasants and servants, who, all of them with tears, came to take a farewell of their mistress. During service I wept plentifully, made the

sign of the cross, and inclined myself to the ground, but I did not pray with my soul, and upon the whole was rather cool. I occupied my thoughts with the new coat which I wore, and which was too tight for me and very uncomfortable. I thought how I should manage not to soil my trousers at the knees, and I made the most minute observations on all present.

Papa stood at the head of the coffin—he was white like snow, and only with an effort kept back his tears; his tall figure, in a black dress-coat, the pale expressive face, and, as usual, the graceful assured manners when he made the sign of the cross, inclined himself, touching the floor with his hand,* took the candle from the hands of the priest, or went to the coffin,—all was exceedingly effective; but, I don't know why, I did not like in him the being capable of shewing himself effective at this moment. Mimi stood leaning against the wall and seemed hardly able to stand on her feet; her dress was disorderly and covered with feathers, the cap set all on one side; her eyes were red with weeping, her feet trembled, she sobbed incessantly with a heart-rending voice, and again and again covered her face with her pocket-handkerchief and her hands. I suspected that she did this in order to repose herself, unseen by the spectators, from the continual sobbing. I recollect how, the evening before, she told papa that "mama's death was a terrible blow for her, which she could never hope to support; that she lost everything with her; that this angel (thus she calls mama) even near death did not forget her, and declared her wish to secure for ever

* Customs in the Greek funeral service.

hers and Katenka's fate." She shed bitter tears while relating this, and it may be, that her sorrow, if not pure and exclusive, was still sincere. Lubotshka, in black garments and with overflowing tears, stood with her head inclined upon her breast; she rarely looked at the coffin, and when she did so, her face expressed only childish fear. Katénka stood near her mother, and, notwithstanding her lengthened face, was as lovely as ever.

The frank nature of Woloda was frank also in grief, he stood thoughtful, staring with fixed eyes at some object; suddenly his lips began to quiver; he made hastily the sign of the cross, and inclined himself. All the strangers present were insupportable to me. The phrases of condolence they addressed to papa—that "she was better off now, that she was too good for this world," and so on—awakened in me something like wrath.

What right had they to weep over and talk of her? Some of them, speaking of us, called us '*orphans.*' Just as if it were not known that children who have lost their mother are so called! They liked, probably, to be the first to give us that name: like those who find a pleasure in being the first to call a newly-married girl '*Madam.*' In the furthest corner of the room, almost hidden by the open door of the buffet, stood, bent on her knees, a grey old woman. With joined hands and eyes uplifted to heaven, she wept not, but prayed. Her soul was in the presence of God; she asked him to unite her soon to her whom she had loved beyond anything on earth, and she firmly hoped that this would ere long be so.

"That's the one who sincerely loved her!" thought I, and I felt ashamed of myself.

The requiem was over; the face of the deceased was uncovered, and all those present, excepting ourselves, went to the coffin to take leave of her with a kiss.*

One of the last who went to take leave of the departed mistress, was a peasant woman, holding by the hand a pretty girl five years of age, whom she had brought with her, God knows for what reason. At the same moment I dropped my wet pocket-handkerchief with an action of despair, and stooped to take it up, when a loud piercing scream startled me and filled me with such terror, that were I to live a hundred years I should never forget it; and even now, when I think of it, a cold shudder comes over me. I raised my head. On the chair near the coffin stood the peasant woman, and held in her arms with difficulty the little girl, who, struggling with her hands, turned backwards her terrified face, and staring with fixed eyes on the face of the deceased, screamed with a frightful, furious strength. I screamed likewise with a voice perhaps yet more frightful, and ran out of the room.

At this moment only I understood whence proceeded the strong oppressive smell, which, mixing with the scent of the incense, filled the room; and the thought that the face, which a few days ago was still full of beauty and freshness—that face which I loved more than anything in the world—could now inspire a feeling of horror, revealed to me, as if for the first time, the terrible truth, and filled my heart with despair.

* The Russian popular custom.—*Translator.*

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE LAST SAD RECOLLECTIONS.

MAMA was no longer there, but our life went on as usual; we slept and arose at the same time, and in the same rooms; the breakfast, dinner, and supper—all was at the usual hour—everything stood in the same place—nothing in the house nor in our mode of life was altered—but *she* was not there.

I felt as if, after such a misfortune, everything ought to have changed; our former order of life seemed to me an offence towards her memory—it recalled too vividly her presence.

The day before the burial I wanted to rest a little after dinner, and went to Natalia Sawishna's room, meaning to establish myself comfortably on her bed, on the soft down, under the warm wadded counterpane. When I entered, Natalia Sawishna was herself lying on the bed and apparently slumbering; but on hearing the noise of my steps she raised herself up, took the handkerchief off which covered her face from the flies, and adjusting her cap, sat on the edge of the bed.

As it had frequently happened before that I came to sleep in her room, she guessed why I entered, and said:

"Do you come for a little rest, darling? Lie down."

"What's the matter with you Natalia Sawishna?"

said I, forcing her down again; "I did not come for that—no, you are tired yourself—lie down."

"No, darling, I have rested." (I knew that she had not slept for many nights.) "Yes—and I do not want sleep now," added she with a heavy sigh.

I wished to speak to Natalia Sawishna of our misfortune; I knew her sincerity and love, and therefore to weep with her was for me a consolation.

"Natalia Sawishna," said I, after a short pause, and while seating myself upon the bed, "would you ever have thought this?"

The old woman looked at me with astonishment and curiosity, not understanding what I asked.

"Who could think it?" repeated I.

"Ah, my darling," said she glancing at me with a look of tender compassion, "not only who could think it before, but even now I cannot believe it to be true. For me, aged as I am, long ago it would have been time to lay my old bones to rest; but that I should live even to see this—the old master, your grandpapa, of blessed memory, the Prince Nicola Michailowitsh, two brothers of his, your sister Amenka—all of them buried and all younger than I am—and now, my darling, she also, to my lasting grief, gone home before me! But it was His holy will! He took her away because she was worthy of it, and He wants to have the good ones with Him!"

This simple thought struck me as consoling, and I drew nearer to Natalia Sawishna. She pressed her hands to her brow and looked upwards; her hollow, moistened eyes expressed a deep but tranquil sorrow. She firmly hoped that God would not for long separate

her from the one on whom, for so many years, the whole force of her love had been concentrated.

"Yes, my dear, it is long since I nursed and fondled her, and she called me Natasha. She used to jump up to me, to caress, to kiss me, and to say, 'My Nashik, my darling, my ducky,' and I answered jokingly, 'Well, love, I don't think you love me; you will soon be a young lady and go away to marry, and your Nashik will be forgotten.' Then she grew pensive: 'No,' said she, 'I had better not marry if Nashik cannot go with me;—I will never leave her.' Alas! and now she has left me! But, in truth, whom did she not love? Yes, darling, to forget your mama must be impossible for you. She was no human creature; she was an angel from heaven. When her soul is in the heavenly kingdom, she will continue to love you there and to rejoice in you."

"Why do you say *when* her soul is in the heavenly kingdom?" asked I; "she is there now I think."

"No, my dear," replied she, lowering her voice and drawing nearer still to me; "her soul is yet here." And she pointed upwards. She spoke in a whisper, and with such feeling and conviction that I too raised my eyes involuntarily and looked at the ceiling, searching for something.

"Before the souls of the just go into Paradise they have still forty trials to undergo for forty days, and during this time yet linger in their own home."*

She spoke yet for a long while in this strain, and with the same simplicity and persuasion as though it were

* Russian popular belief.—*Translator.*

of the commonest things which she had herself witnessed, and to doubt which could never enter anybody's head.

I listened almost breathlessly, and although I did not well understand what she said, yet I did not for a moment question her word.

"Yes, love, now she is here, looking at us and hearing, perhaps, what we say," concluded Natalia Sawishna.

And raising her head she was silent.

She wiped the tears away which flowed from her eyes, looked straight into my face, and said in a voice trembling with emotion: "Through many trials God leads me to Him! Why am I still here? For whom shall I live? Whom shall I love?"

"And do you not love us?" asked I sadly, and half suffocated by tears.

"God knows how I love you my darling—but love any one as I did her—that I cannot." She could say no more, turned away, and cried bitterly.

I thought no longer of sleeping; we both sat silently and wept together.

Foka entered the room; but, seeing our emotion, and not wishing probably to disturb us, he stopped at the door.

"What do you want, good Foka?" asked Natalia, wiping off her tears.

"Half-a-pound of 'Corinths', four pounds of sugar, and three pounds of rice for the 'Kutia.'"*

"Directly, directly, my friend," said Natalia Sa-

* Rice cooked with honey and offered at the burial, for each person to partake a little, in honour of the deceased.—*Translator.*

wishna, snuffing busily a little tobacco, and hastening towards the drawers. The last traces of her grief, provoked by our conversation, disappeared when she betook herself to fulfil her duty, which she thought always important.

"Why *four* pounds?" said she, grumbling, while weighing the sugar on a steelyard; "three and a-half will be sufficient."

And she withdrew some pieces.

"And what does it mean that I gave only yesterday eight pounds of rice, and now they ask for more? As you like, Foka, but I shall not give away the rice in such a manner. Wanka is glad there is confusion in the house; he thinks that nobody looks to the things now. But I will not have careless extravagance with regard to my master's goods. Did one ever see such a thing—*eight* pounds?"

"Well, what have I to do with it? he says it's all gone!"

"Hum! hum! well, there it is. Let him have it!"

I was struck at that time by this sudden transition from the most touching sensibility with which she had spoken to me, to grumbling and petty reckoning. Thinking of it at a later time, I comprehended that, notwithstanding all which passed in her soul, enough presence of mind was left to her to fulfil her duties, and that it was the power of habit which led her back to her wonted employment. Her grief was so powerful and true, that she found it unnecessary to conceal her being able to occupy herself with unimportant objects; no, she would not have understood how such an idea

could occur to any one. Vanity is a feeling so contradictory to real sorrow; and, nevertheless, so firmly inherent in human nature, that very rarely even the strongest grief quite excludes it. Vanity in grief shews itself by the wish to appear either afflicted, or unhappy, or firm; and this mean wish—which we do not acknowledge, but which scarcely ever, even in the greatest misfortune, leaves us—diminishes the force, dignity, and sincerity of grief. Natalia Sawishna was so deeply smitten by her misfortune, that in her soul not one wish was left, she only lived by habit. Having handed the provisions to Foka, and reminded him of the pies which had to be prepared for the priests, she left him, took her stocking, and once more sat down with me.

The conversation recurred to the former topic, and we mourned and shed tears again. These interviews with Natalia Sawishna were repeated every day; her quiet tears and devoted words afforded me relief and comfort. Soon, however, we parted; three days after the burial we all went to Moscow, and I never saw her again.

Grandmama received the sad news only with our arrival, and her grief was extraordinary. We were not admitted to her, because she was a whole week out of her mind, and the doctors very much feared for her life, as she would not only take no medicine whatever, but spoke to nobody, did not sleep, and refused all sustenance. Sometimes sitting alone in her room, in her arm-chair, she began to laugh, then to cry without tears, or else fell into convulsions, and screamed with a terrible voice dreadful and incoherent words. It was

the first heavy grief she had experienced in her life, and it brought her to despair. She wanted to accuse some one of her misfortune, to whom she said hard things, and rated with extraordinary bitterness, then rose from her arm-chair, paced the room to and fro, and fell senseless on the floor.

Once I went into her room; she sat apparently quiet, but her look struck me. Her eyes were wide open, but their glance was vacant and stupid; she looked straight at me, but without seeing me. Her lips began slowly to smile, and she said, with a touching, tender voice, "Come here, my dear—come here, my angel!" I thought she talked to me, and approached her, but she looked not on me then. "Oh! if you could but know, love, how I was distressed, and how glad I am now to see you!" I understood that she imagined to see mama, and I stopped. "They told me that you were gone—what nonsense!" said she, frowning, "as if you could die before me!" And she laughed with a terrible hysteric laugh.

Those persons only who are capable of loving strongly, can experience strong grief; but this very necessity of loving serves as a reaction against grief, and saves them. The moral nature of man is yet more tenacious of life than the physical. Grief never kills.

After some time grandmama was able to weep, and felt herself better.

The first thought, when she recovered her reason, was of us, and her love to us yet increased. We did not leave her arm-chair; she talked of mama, wept softly, and caressed us.

Nobody, looking at grandmama's grief, could venture to say that she exaggerated it, and the expression of it was strong and touching; but I don't know how it was, I sympathised more with Natalia Sawishna—and up to this day I am convinced, that nobody loved and regretted mama so purely and sincerely as this simple-hearted, loving creature.

With mama's death the happy time of childhood was closed, and a new epoch—that of youth—began; but as the recollection of Natalia Sawishna, whom I saw no more, and who had such a strong and beneficial influence upon the direction of my thoughts and the development of my feelings, belong to the first epoch, I will here add a few words about her, and her death.

After our departure she was much annoyed by her compulsory inaction—so I was told later by people from the village. Although all the drawers and shelves were yet under her superintendence,—although she never ceased to arrange them,—to take things in and out and put them freshly in order, she yet sadly wanted the noise and activity of the seniorial house to which she had been accustomed from her childhood. Grief, the change in her mode of life, and the want of activity, soon developed in her the illness to which she had a tendency.

Hardly a year after mama's death, dropsy declared itself, and she was confined to her bed. I can imagine how sad it must have been for Natalia Sawishna to live, and yet more, to die, alone in the large empty house of Petroffska, without relations or any who were near to her.

Every one in the house loved and esteemed her; but she had no close friendship with anybody, and she was proud of it.

She thought that in her position, enjoying the confidence of her master, and having so many goods under her care, friendship for any one would have led her to blameable indulgence and condescension; for this reason, and perhaps also because she had nothing in common with the other servants, she kept them all at a distance, and said, that "for her, were neither godfather nor kinsman in the house; and that she knew no exceptions with regard to her master's property."

She sought and found consolation by confiding her feelings to God in fervent prayer; but sometimes, in moments of weakness, to which all of us are subject, when the best consolations for man are the tears and the compassion of his fellow-creatures, she took on her bed her old dog Moska, (which licked her hands, and fixed on her his yellow eyes,) spoke to it, and wept softly while caressing it. When Moska began to whine she tried to quiet it, and said, "Enough, I know without thy telling me that I shall soon die." A month before her death she took from her drawers some fine white calico, white cambric, and pink riband, and with the help of the maid-servants prepared the garments in which she desired to be buried. She put in order all the things on her shelves, and gave up to the bailiff an inventory of them, made out with the utmost accuracy. She kept back only two silk gowns, an old shawl, and the military uniform of grandpapa—things given to her as her exclusive property, and which were, thanks to

her care and order, in an excellent state of preservation, particularly the handsome gold embroidery on the latter.

Shortly before her death she expressed a wish that one of the dresses, a pink one, might be used for Woloda for a *robe de chambre;* the other, of many colours, for me; the shawl should be given to Lubotshka. The uniform was to belong to the one who should first be an officer. All the remainder of her property,—save some forty roubles, which she destined for remembrances and to defray the costs of the burial—was to go to her brother, with whom, as he lived a dissipated life in a distant province, she had never had any intercourse during her lifetime.

When the brother arrived to take possession of the inheritance, and became aware that the whole amount of it consisted of twenty-five roubles in paper money, he would not believe it, and said it was impossible that his sister—who had lived for sixty years in a wealthy house, with everything under her care, having been stingy all her life, and quarrelsome about giving away the least petty thing—should have left no more.

However, it was a fact.

Natalia Sawishna was ill for two months, and supported her sufferings with true christian fortitude; she neither grumbled nor complained—only, as was her custom, she appealed continually to God. An hour before her last moment she confessed herself, took with a subdued joy the sacrament, and received the extreme unction. After that she asked forgiveness of all the inhabitants of the house for any wrong she had perhaps

done to them; and requested the priest, father Wasilia, to tell us how many times she blessed all of us for our love, and how she asked us to forgive her, if in her ignorance she had offended any one. "But a thief I have never been, and have not even used a piece of thread that was not my own." This was the only quality that she valued in herself.

Dressed in the gown and cap so long prepared, and with her head on the cushion made for the purpose, she talked uninterruptedly up to the last moment with the priest; and suddenly recollecting she had left nothing for the poor, took ten roubles and asked him to distribute them in the parish; then she made the sign of the cross, lay down and breathed her last, while pronouncing, with a smile of delight, the name of God.

She quitted life without a regret; and, far from fearing death, she welcomed it as a blessing. How often is this said, and how seldom is it a reality! Natalia Sawishna had no reason to fear death, because she died with an immoveable faith, and while fulfilling strictly the commands of the Gospel. Her whole life had been one of *pure disinterested love and self-abnegation.* Had her convictions been of a more enlightened order, her life directed to a higher aim, would this pure soul, therefore, have been more worthy of love and respect?

She accomplished the best and highest thing in this world—she died without fear and without regret.

They buried her, according to her wish, not far from the small temple which stands over mama's tomb.

The little mound, overgrown with nettles and burdock,

under which she sleeps, is surrounded by a black railing, and I never forget, when coming from the temple, to go to the railing and salute this earth by reverentially bowing to the ground.

Sometimes I stand thoughtfully between the temple and the railing, and sad recollections pass through my mind.

The idea once then came to me, "Has Providence only connected me with these two beings in order to make me all my life long regret them?"

PART II.

THE HISTORY OF MY YOUTH.

CHAPTER I.

A SLOW JOURNEY.

AGAIN two carriages stood at the door of the house in Petroffska; one in which Mimi, the two girls, and the ladies' maid took their seats, with the Starost Jacob on the coach-box; the other, a britshka, in which I sat with Woloda and the servant Wassili. Papa, who was to follow us in a few days to Moscow, stood on the staircase, bareheaded, and made the sign of the cross at the windows of the carriages.

"Christ be with you!—good-bye."

Jacob and the coachman (for we drove our own horses) lifted their caps and made the sign of the cross: "Well, well, God be with us!"

The carriages began to roll along, and the birch-trees of the great avenue passed, one after the other, out of our sight.

I was not sad at all; my mind was not turned to

what I had left, but to what awaited me. In proportion as I left the objects connected with those sad recollections which had filled my imagination up to this time, these same recollections lost their power, and soon gave way to consolatory feeling of life, youthful strength, freshness and hope.

Rarely have I spent four days more—I will not say gaily, for I should still have hesitated to shew myself gay—but more agreeably and pleasantly than those of our journey.

Before my eyes, were neither the closed door of mama's room, which I could not pass by without suffering, nor the covered piano, which nobody opened and at which I could not look without some fear, nor the mourning dresses (each of us had on our common travelling costume), nor all those other objects which recalled to me in so lively a manner the irreparable loss, and obliged me to abstain from every manifestation of merriment, for fear of offending in any way *her* memory.

Now, on the contrary, a continual change of new and animated objects and places attracted and occupied my attention, and the charms of spring awakened in my soul a soothing sense of satisfaction with the present, and of blissful hope for the future.

Very early in the morning, the merciless Wassili, who had only a short time entered our service, and was yet, as usual with such people, over zealous, came and tore away my counterpane, and affirmed that it was time to rise, and that all was ready for the continuation of the journey. However much you might stretch and rebel, however ardently wish to be able to remain only one

quarter of an hour longer, enjoying the sweet morning slumber,—the decided face of Wassili shewed that he would grant no mercy, and was ready to tear away the counterpane twenty times more; so I submitted, and ran down into the court to wash myself at the fountain.

In the vestibule the tea-kettle was already on the fire, which Milka the groom, reddening like a crab, blew with the bellows; the court-yard was gray and misty as if from a smoking dunghill; the sun lighted the eastern part of the sky with a gay clear light, and the straw roofs of the sheds surrounding the court-yard glittered with night dew. Beneath them stood our horses tied to the crib, and one heard their eternal chewing. A curly-haired dog, which had rested itself before the dawn of day on a dry dunghill, now rose lazily, and wagging its tail trotted slowly through the court-yard.

The busy landlady opened the creaking gate, turned the pensive cows into the street, whence the bellowing and bleating of cattle was to be heard, and exchanged a few words with a yet sleepy neighbour. Philip, with the sleeves of his shirt turned up, was working round the wheels of a draw-well, the sparkling fresh water flowing over from it into an oaken trough, around which, in a pool, were bathing early rising ducks. I looked with pleasure at the strongly marked face of Philip, covered with a long beard, and at the muscles and veins which shewed themselves upon his large strong hand whenever he made an effort. Behind the partition where Mimi and the girls slept, and through which we had still chatted together at night, some movement was

now heard. The maidservant passed in and out with clothes, and at last the door opened, and we were called for breakfast.

Wassili in a paroxysm of zeal ran repeatedly into the room, carrying away now one object, now another, and entreating the maidservant to get ready more quickly.

The horses were put to the carriage, and shewed their impatience by the tinkling of their bells; parcels, trunks, dressing-cases and boxes were replaced, and we began to take our seats. But every time we got in we found a larger mountain of things in the britshka, and nobody could understand how all had been arranged yesterday, and how we should sit. Particularly one tea-box made me exceedingly uncomfortable, but Wassili assured me "that all this would soon get right," and I was forced to believe him.

The sun was just rising, covered with close white clouds, and everything around came out in a quiet cheery light; all was so beautiful to look at, and I felt so tranquil and easy!

Our road lay before us like a broad winding riband between corn-fields glittering with dew; here and there a dark bush or a young birch-tree cast a long shadow across the ruts and the scanty grass-blades of the road. The monotonous noise of the carriages and the bells did not overpower the joyful song of the larks flying above the road. The smell of cloth eaten by moths, of dust, and something sour which distinguished our britshka, was covered by the fresh scent of the morning, and I felt in my heart a delightful movement, a wish to do something, the sign of sincere delight.

I had not been able to say my prayers in the court-yard of the inn, but as I had been once told that the very day on which I should neglect to fulfil this duty some misfortune would happen to me, I hastened to correct my omission; lifting my cap and cowering in a corner of the britshka, I recited my prayer and made the sign of the cross unobserved beneath my coat. But a thousand different objects distracted my attention, and I repeated several times thoughtlessly the same words of my prayer.

Now, on the little foot-path bordering the road, some slowly moving figures became visible. They were pilgrims; their heads were tied round with dirty handkerchiefs, they carried on their backs wallets made of birch-bark, and their feet were wrapped up in dirty rags and stuck in heavy bast shoes. Moving their sticks regularly, and hardly looking at us, they moved forward with heavy steps, one after the other, and I was preoccupied by the questions, "Whence do they come? Whither do they go? Is a long pilgrimage before them?" Soon the shadow which they cast on the road mixed with the shadow of the bushes which they passed.

Then a carriage-and-four came towards us. Two seconds only, and the faces, looking out from it so smilingly and curiously at us, had vanished; and how strange did it seem that these faces had nothing in common with me, and probably I should never see them again.

Here came two horses in a collar, the harness twisted round their necks: sitting on one, with his legs, in large

boots, hanging negligently upon the sides of the horse, his lambswool cap on one ear, rode a young postilion, singing a melancholy song. His face and position shewed so much careless and idle satisfaction, that I imagined it the summit of happiness to be a postilion and to sing melancholy songs.

There, at a distance through the hollow way, on the light blue sky, stood out the green roof of a village church; soon the whole village became visible, together with the roof of the seniorial house, and the garden belonging to it. Who lived in that house? Were there children, parents, teachers? Why did we not enter the house and become acquainted with the inhabitants?

Now there was a caravan of loaded waggons, which obliged our carriages to get out of the way. "What are you carrying?" asked Wassili of the waggoner, who, hanging his legs indolently over the driving-seat and waving his whip, followed us for a long while with a serious unmeaning look, and only answered something when it was no longer possible to understand him.

"What goods?" said Wassili, turning to the second waggon, on the seat of which lay the driver stretched out under a new mat.

The red-haired head with a red face lifted itself up for a second from beneath the mat, measured our britshka with a cold contemptuous look, and lay down again; whereupon I supposed that this driver probably did not know what people we were, whence we came, or whither we went.

Some time absorbed by these different observations,

I had not yet paid any attention to the crooked cyphers which indicated the number of 'versts' we passed.

But now the sun began to burn on my head and back, the road became more and more dusty, the obstacles in the carriage grew more insupportable, and I felt very uncomfortable; so my whole attention turned to the distance marks and their cyphers, and I solved difficult mathematical problems in order to make out the time when we must arrive at the station.

"Twelve versts are the third of thirty-six, and there are in all forty-one to Lipetz; consequently we have made a third and how much?" and so on.

"Wassili," said I, when I observed that he began '*to catch fish*'* on the coach-box, "let us change seats, will you?" Wassili agreed, and directly stretched himself out in the britshka, and began to snore; but to me, from my height, the most agreeable picture presented itself, namely, our horses, which were all known to me down to the least details of their qualities.

"Why is Diashak to-day on the right side and not on the left, Philip?" asked I, somewhat slily.

"Diashak?"

"And Nerusinska doesn't draw at all," said I.

"It is impossible to put Diashak to the left,"† replied Philip, without noticing my last observation, "it is not a horse as one should put on that side. On the left such a horse as that is wanted, which—the long and short of it is—*such* a horse and not *such* a horse."

* To fall asleep.—*Translator.*

† In Russia it is the custom to drive three horses, one being fastened at one side of the pair; occasionally one each side.

And Philip, after this bit of eloquence, turned himself to the right, and, nagging the reins with all his might, began to bother poor Diashak in every possible way; although the unfortunate animal was doing his best, and drew the carriage almost alone. Philip continued these manœuvres until he felt the necessity of breathing and resting himself, and for this purpose thought it necessary to settle his cap on one side, although it was very well before.

I profited by this happy opportunity, and asked him to let me have the reins till, one after the other, I held them all six in my own hand, and the whip also, and was now made completely happy. I asked repeatedly whether I did right, but, as usual, Philip was not satisfied, and soon destroyed my felicity again.

The heat increased, and now, from the window of the carriage, a hand became visible with a bottle and a parcel of eatables.

Wassili, with great agility, leaped from the britshka, and brought us something to eat and drink.

Descending a mountain, we all got out of the carriages, and ran down to a bridge, while Wassili and Jacob supported the carriage on each side—as though they were able to hold it up in case it should be overturned. Then, with Mimi's permission, we changed seats; and either I or Woloda sat in the carriage, and Lubotshka or Katenka in the britshka.

This change afforded the girls the greatest satisfaction, because they soon found out that it was gayer in the britshka.

At the time of the greatest heat, on passing a wood,

we alighted, broke off a quantity of branches, and transformed the britshka into a bower. This moving bower then quickly followed the carriage, and excited Lubotshka to one of those piercing shrieks of pleasure which she was in the habit of producing occasionally.

At last we approached the village where we were to halt and dine. Already we perceive the smell of the village, the smoke, tar, and sheep—we hear the noise of voices, footsteps, and cars; the bells ring no longer so clearly as in the open air; on both sides the way is lined with huts, which have straw roofs, entrances ornamentally carved, and small windows with red or green painted shutters, from which, here and there, a woman's curious face looks forth.

There are the peasant children in shirts only, standing immoveable to stare at us with wide open eyes and stiffly stretched-out arms, or running with their bare feet through the dust to follow the carriages and to sit on the luggage behind, notwithstanding the menacing gestures of Philip. There are also red-haired waiters running from different sides up to the carriages, and each with words and gesticulations inviting us to prefer his inn for our halting place. Presently a gate creaks and we enter a court-yard.

Four hours of rest and liberty await us!

CHAPTER II.

A THUNDERSTORM.

THE sun inclined to the west, and large hot rays burnt almost unendurably on my neck and cheeks, while thick clouds of dust were raised from the road and filled the air.

There was not the slightest wind which could have carried it away. I did not know what to do; neither the dust-blackened face of Woloda who slumbered in a corner, nor the motion of Philip's back, nor the long shadow cast by our britshka and running after us, gave me relief. My whole attention was concentrated upon the distance-posts which I spied from far, and upon the clouds which, at first dispersed over the sky, now assumed a threatening blackness and gathered into one solid thick mass.

From time to time distant thunder was heard. This last circumstance highly increased my impatience to arrive at the inn where we had to pass the night. A thunderstorm always gave me an inexpressibly heavy feeling of fear and sadness.

We were still distant ten versts from the next village, and in the meantime the large purple cloud, starting from no one knows where, advanced more and more towards us. The sun, not yet obscured by clouds,

marked its dark form with a dazzling light and with grey stripes proceeding from it down to the horizon. At intervals was seen in the distance vivid lightning followed by low sounds which increased continually, and at last melted into one long roll, embracing the whole sky. Wassili covered the britshka; the coachman wrapped himself in his cloak, and at each thunderclap lifted his cap and made the sign of the cross. The horses pricked their ears and snorted, as if to smell the fresh air which rapidly flying clouds left behind, and the britshka rolled more swiftly on the dusty road. I felt uneasy, and it was as though the blood flowed quicker in my veins. But now the clouds began to cover the sun completely, yet once more it threw a light on the frightfully dark side of the horizon, and then finally disappeared behind them.

All around changed suddenly and assumed a gloomy character. An aspen wood, which we were passing, quite trembled, the leaves, shining with a whitish light on the dark lilac ground of the clouds, were agitated and noisy; the tops of the large trees began to incline themselves, and dried leaves and grass whirled over the road. The swallows and the white-breasted shore-birds flew round the britshka, and even passed across the fore legs of the horses; the choughs, with outspread wings, were laid as it were on one side by the wind. The leathern apron which covered us began to be blown about and to beat the sides of the britshka.

The lightning flashed as if it were in the carriage itself, and, for a moment breaking through the darkness, illuminated the grey cloth, the silk galloon in the

carriage, and the figure of Woloda pressed up into a corner.

In this very instant we heard above our heads a terrible sound, which, apparently rising higher and higher and spreading wider and wider, increased continually, and went off into one deafening thunderclap, which made us involuntarily tremble and hold back our breath. The wrath of God! How much poetry is there in this simple popular thought!

The carriage went quicker and quicker, and by the backs of Philip and Wassili, the first impatiently straining at the reins, I saw that they were frightened likewise.

The britshka rolled rapidly down a hollow and knocked against the wooden bridge; I durst not move, and expected our destruction every moment.

Crack! a trace gave way, and, notwithstanding the continual deafening thunderclaps, we were obliged to come to a stand upon the bridge.

Leaning my head against the side of the britshka, I followed hopelessly and with a beating heart the movements of Philip's thick black fingers, as he tied the broken trace and energetically set right the harness with his hand and whip.

The sense of terror increased in me with the force of the thunder, and—in the moment of supreme silence which generally precedes the greatest intensity of the strokes—mounted to such a height, that I thought a quarter of an hour more of this excitement would kill me. At this point, from beneath the bridge, rose a human being, robed in a dirty torn shirt, with an

idiotic face, tossing his uncovered and shaven head, with thin legs devoid of muscles, and red shining stumps instead of hands, which he put straight into the britshka.

"My—my—my lord! a kopeek for—God's—sake," groaned a feeble voice; and the wretched being made at each word the sign of the cross, and bowed himself to the ground.

I cannot describe the feeling of cold horror which penetrated my heart at the moment. A shudder crept under my hair, and my eyes stared with vacant fright at the wretch.

Wassili, who was charged with the distribution of alms during the journey, had first to help Philip, and only when all was ready and Philip took the reins again, did he commence a search for his purse. But hardly had the britshka began to move, when a blinding flash filled the whole atmosphere with a fiery light, compelling the horses to stop, and was followed immediately by such a deafening roar, that it seemed as though the vault of heaven were breaking down upon us.

The wind still increased; the cloak of Wassili, the manes and tails of the horses, the apron, all took one direction, and struggled desperately in the furious blast.

On the top of the britshka fell the first heavy drops of rain, "one, two, three," and then suddenly, as if somebody were drumming over us, the whole country resounded with the noise of the pouring rain.

By the movements of Wassili I saw that he opened his purse, the poor wretch all this time making the sign of

the cross, and bowing, ran close to the wheels at the risk of being crushed, and kept repeating, "For—God's—sake!" At last the kopeek fell to the ground, and the miserable creature, stretching out his mutilated members, wet through and through, stopped perplexed in the middle of the road and vanished from my sight.

The heavy rain, driven by the stormy wind, poured as though in pailsful; from the heavy cloak of Wassili it dropped down and formed pools on the apron; the dust changed now into a sticky paste which covered the wheels, and the ruts were transformed into muddy streamlets.

The lightning became larger and paler, and the thunder-claps were no longer so frightful under the monotonous rattling of the deluge. At last the rain abated, the clouds began to disperse; it was light where the sun stood, and between the grey-white clouds the azure of the sky became visible.

The moment afterwards a dazzling ray glittered in the pools on the road, on the lines of the rain, now falling thin and straight as if through a sieve, and on the fresh leaves and grass blades. The black cloud stood yet threatening on the opposite side of the horizon, but I no longer feared it. I felt again an inexpressibly delightful hope, and trust in life quickly replacing the weight of fear. My heart smiled like the refreshed, reviving nature. Wassili took off his cloak and shook out the water. Woloda flung back the apron, and I stood up in the britshka to drink the new, fresh, balmy air. Before us rolled the carriage, all wet and glittering in the sun as though just polished. On one

side of the road endless oat-fields—here and there interrupted by small ravines, brilliant with green and moist earth—extended to the horizon like a shadowy carpet; on the other side the aspen wood—interwoven with hazel-nut bushes, and carpeted with thyme, as if in the plenitude of happiness—did no longer rustle, but slowly dropped rich sparkling drops from its bathed branches on to the withered leaves of the past year.

Happy songs resounded above and from all sides; the little birds in the humid bushes called one another; and from the interior of the wood the voice of the cuckoo was clearly heard. So delightful was that wonderful scent of the wood which follows a thunderstorm in spring, the scent of birch-trees, violets, mushrooms, and thyme, that I could no longer remain in the britshka.

I jumped out, ran to the bushes, and, regardless of the showers which came down upon me from them, I tore off some sprigs of thyme, beat my face with them, and smelt their delicious scent.

Then, in spite of the mud which got into my boots, and of my stockings being all wet, I leaped through the puddles to the window of the carriage.

"Lubotshka! Katenka!" screamed I, handing them some of the thyme, "look, how delicious!"

The girls smelt it, and cried, "Ah!" Mimi shrieked to me to go away for fear the wheels should hurt me.

"Yes, but smell how delicious!" persisted I.

CHAPTER III.

A NEW POINT OF VIEW.

KATENKA now sat with me in the britshka, and inclining her lovely head, gazed thoughtfully on the road. I looked at her in silence, and wondered at the unchildlike expression of sadness, which I observed for the first time on her rosy face.

"We shall soon be in Moscow," said I, at last; "how large do you imagine it to be?"

"I don't know," replied she.

"Well, but what do you imagine? is it as large as Serpuchoff?"

"What?"

"Nothing."

But with the instinctive feeling by which one person guesses the thoughts of another, and which serves as a leading thread in conversation, Katenka felt that her indifference was disagreeable to me; she raised her head, and turning towards me, said—

"Did your papa tell you that we were to live at grandmama's?"

"He said that we should live with grandmama entirely."

"Shall we all live there?"

"Of course; we shall live on the upper floor in one

half, you in the other—Papa in the wing of the house; and we shall dine altogether downstairs with grandmama."

"But mama says that grandmama is so very grave, and so easily made angry."

"No! it is only at first that she seems so. She is grave, but not angry; on the contrary, very kind and gay. If you could but have seen what a ball we had at her house!"

"However, I am afraid of her; besides, who knows whether we—"

Katenka stopped short, and was again thoughtful.

"What?" asked I anxiously.

"Nothing—I said only that—"

"No! you said, 'Who knows whether we'—"

"And you said that there was such a ball at grandmama's?"

"Yes, it is a pity that you were not there; there were plenty of guests, about a thousand persons, princes and generals—there was music, and I danced—"

"Katenka," said I, abruptly leaving off my description, "you are not listening."

"No, I listen; you said that you danced."

"Why are you so serious?"

"It is impossible to be always gay."

"No, you are very much changed since we returned from Moscow. Tell me the truth, why you are so strange?" said I, turning to her with a decided tone.

"Am I strange?" said Katenka, with an animation which proved that my observation interested her. "I am by no means strange."

"No, you are not the same as before," continued I. "One could see before that you were our equal in every thing, that you loved us like relations, and as we did you: now you are always so serious and keep apart from us."

"No, no, not at all."

"No, let me finish, please," interrupted I, feeling already a slight tickling in my nose, the precursor of tears, which usually came into my eyes when I expressed a long pent-up feeling; "you avoid us, and talk only to Mimi, as if you would no longer know us."

"But it is impossible to remain continually the same, one must sometimes change a little," replied Katenka, who was in the habit of pleading always some such fatalistic necessity when she did not know what to say.

I recollect that once, quarrelling with Lubotshka who called her "stupid girl," she answered that not every body could be wise, that there must also be stupid people; but I was not satisfied with the unavoidable necessity of changing sometimes, and so asked,

"*Why* is that necessary?"

"Perhaps we may not always live together," said Katenka, slightly colouring and looking seriously at Philip's back. "My mama could live with your mother because she was her friend; but will it be convenient to the countess, who they say is so easily offended? And besides, sooner or later, we must separate: you are rich—you have Petroffska; we are poor—mama has nothing."

"You are rich—we are poor!" these words and the ideas connected with them appeared to me uncommonly

strange. According to my conception, up to that time, only beggars and peasants were poor; and I could not reconcile in my imagination the ideas of poverty and of the graceful, good Katenka. I felt as if Mimi and her daughter ought to live with us for ever and share everything. It could not be otherwise. At present a thousand new confused thoughts with regard to their lonely position crowded in my head, and I felt so conscience-stricken at our being rich and they poor, that I coloured and did not venture to look at Katenka.

"What does it signify that we are rich and they poor?" thought I; "and in what way does that necessitate our separation? Why should we not possess in common what we have?"—but I understood that I could not talk with Katenka about this, and a certain practical instinct, contrary to this logical reasoning, told me that she might be right, and yet it would be out of place to tell her so.

"It is impossible that you should leave us—how could we live apart?"

"What is to be done? I certainly do not like it; only if it must be so, I know what I am to do."

"You will become an actress—that's absurd!" exclaimed I, knowing that it was always her favourite dream to become an actress.

"No; I said so when I was little."

"Well, what else will you do?"

"I shall go into a convent and live there; I can go out in a black dress with a velvet cap." Katenka cried.

Did it ever happen to you, my readers, that you became suddenly aware that your conception of things

was altered, as if all the objects of life had at once turned another, hitherto unknown, side towards you? Such a kind of moral change occurred with me for the first time during our journey, which period I therefore look upon as the beginning of my youth. For the first time I clearly conceived the idea that we, that is our family, were not the *only* persons in the world; that not all interests centred in us; that there existed many other people who had nothing in common with us, cared nothing for us, and even knew nothing of our existence. I no doubt was aware of all this before, but I knew it not as I did now; I had not understood, not felt it.

Thought goes over into conviction only through a special way, and sometimes quite suddenly and differently from that by which other intellects have arrived at the same conclusion.

The conversation with Katenka, striking me deeply and obliging me to reflect on her future position, was such a way for me. As I gazed on the towns and villages by which we passed, in each house of which lived at least one family like ours; on the women and children who looked with curiosity at our carriages, and then for ever lost them from sight; at the labourers and peasants, who not only did not bow to us, (this I saw also at Petroffska) but did not even look at us—the question arose for the first time in my thoughts, What else do they care for, if they do not care for us? And this question was followed by others—For what do they live? How do they educate their children? Do they teach them, and let them play? What are their names? and so on.

CHAPTER IV.

IN MOSCOW.

FROM the time of our arrival at Moscow, the change in my conceptions of objects, of persons and of my connexion with them, became still more perceptible. At my first interview with grandmama, when I saw her thin wrinkled face and half extinguished eyes, the mingled respect and fear with which she inspired me changed into compassion; and when she, inclining her face on the head of Lubotshka, sobbed as if she had before her eyes the corpse of her beloved daughter, my compassion for her grew into love.

I felt deeply sorry on seeing her grief at our meeting. I understood that we for ourselves were nothing in her eyes, and only dear to her as a remembrance; I felt that every kiss she pressed upon my cheeks, told but the one thought, "She is no more—she is dead—I shall never see her again."

Papa—busying himself but little with us in Moscow, and then only with a face continually preoccupied, when perhaps he came to dine formally with us, in a black dress-coat—lost much in my eyes, for all his grand turned-up ruffles, robes-de-chambre, starosts, bailiffs, walks to the threshing-floor, and to the chase.

Karl Iwanitsh—whom grandmama always called

'*uncle*,' and who suddenly (heaven knows why) had the fancy to cover his bald head, known to me from time immemorial, with a reddish wig that had a knitted seam almost down the middle—now appeared to me so strange and ridiculous, that I wondered how it was possible I had not observed it before.

Even between the girls and ourselves there seemed an invisible barrier; they, as well as ourselves, began to have secrets, as if they meant to shew off before us with their skirts which became much longer, and we before them with our trousers with straps. Mimi came to dinner on the first Sunday, in such a pompous dress and so many ribands on her cap, that it was evident we were no longer in the village, and every thing would now be different.

CHAPTER V.

THE ELDER BROTHER.

I WAS only a year and a few months younger than Woloda; we had grown up, learned and played constantly together. Between us the difference of elder and younger brother had never been felt—but at the time of which I have been speaking, I began to understand that Woloda was not on an equality with me either in years, or inclination, or capabilities. I even fancied that Woloda himself felt his priority and was proud of it. This observation, although it may have been false, wounded my self-love, which suffered in every respect by comparison with him. He was my superior in everything—in amusements, in learning, in quarrels, in behaviour; and all this made me withdraw from him, and caused me to experience moral sufferings unknown to me till then.

When Woloda for the first time wore Dutch shirts with plaits, I said directly that I was very angry at not having similar ones, and each time that he arranged his collar I felt as if he did it only for the purpose of offending me. But what tormented me most of all was, the idea that Woloda understood me, and did not choose to shew it.

Who has not experienced those secret, wordless,

communications springing up from a hardly perceptible smile or movement—a look, between people who live constantly together—brothers, friends, man and wife, masters and servants; particularly if these people are not in all things frank with each other? How many only half out-spoken wishes, thoughts and meanings, which one is shy at having understood, are revealed by one accidental glance, when timidly and undecidedly it meets your eye!

It may have been, however, that I was deceived in this case by my superabundant capacity and inclination for analysis; it may have been that Woloda did not in the least feel as I did. He was passionate, frank, and unsteady in his likings. He was attracted by the most varied things, and always gave himself up with all his heart. Suddenly he took a passion for pictures, spent all his money in buying some, asked his master, papa, grandmama, to give him more works of art, and also began himself to draw most zealously; then came a sudden rage for curiosities with which he covered his table, collecting here everything of that kind from the whole house; then a violent fit of reading novels, which he procured secretly and devoured day and night. I was involuntarily influenced by his inclinations, but was much too proud to imitate him, and yet too young and too little independent to choose my own way. But, above all, I envied the happy and nobly-frank character of Woloda, which shewed itself most strikingly in the quarrels between us two. I felt that he behaved well, but I could not imitate him. Once, at the hottest period of his passion for curiosities, I went to his table and

broke accidentally an empty many-coloured smelling-bottle.

"Who told you to touch my things?" asked Woloda, just entering the room, and remarking the disorder occasioned by me in the symmetry of the different treasures on his table; "and where is the smelling-bottle? Perhaps you—"

"It fell down and is smashed in pieces. Well, and what does that signify?"

"Do me the favour *never* to *venture* to touch my things," said he, gathering up the broken pieces and looking at them with vexation.

"Please not to *order* me anything," replied I; "when it's broken, it's broken—and what then?"

And I smiled, although I did not at all like to smile.

"Oh, for you it's nothing, but for me it is *something*," continued Woloda, shrugging his shoulders, which habit he had caught from papa. "First you break my things, and then you laugh.—What a bore that *little boy* is!"

"I a little boy! and you, I suppose, are a man, and very wise!"

"I do not mean to quarrel with you," said Woloda, slightly pushing me. "Go away."

"Don't push me."

"Go away!"

"Again I say, don't push me!"

Woloda took hold of my hand and tried to drag me away from the table; but I was already excited to the last degree—I pushed the table with my foot and upset

it. "There's for you!" and all the china and crystal ornaments fell crashing to the ground.

"You disgusting boy!" exclaimed Woloda, trying to save the tumbling objects.

"Well, now it's all over between us," thought I, when I went out of the room; "now we are separated for ever!"

We did not speak a word to each other till the evening. I felt myself guilty; I was afraid of looking at him, and did not know what to do the whole day.

Woloda, on the contrary, learned assiduously as usual, and, after dinner, talked and laughed with the two girls. As soon as the teacher had ended our lessons I went out of the room; it would have been embarrassing and terrible for me to remain alone with my brother. After the evening class of history, I took my copybook and went towards the door. When I passed Woloda, although I would fain have gone and made peace with him, I pouted and tried to make an angry face. Woloda, at the very same moment, lifted his head, and with a hardly perceptible, good-humouredly satirical smile, looked fully at me. Our eyes met, and I saw that Woloda understood me; and he saw that I was aware of his having understood me; but an invincible feeling obliged me to turn away from him.

"Nikolinka!" said he, with a perfectly simple and by no means pathetic tone, "you have been angry long enough. Pardon me if I have offended you." And he tendered his hand.

It was as though something ascended higher and

higher from my heart, and nearly choked me; but it soon passed away, the tears rushed to my eyes, and I felt relieved.

"Par–don me, Wo–lo–da!" uttered I, taking his hand. Woloda looked at me with an expression as though he did not at all understand why I had tears in my eyes.

CHAPTER VI.

MASHA.

NOT one of the changes, however, produced in my conceptions of things, was so striking to myself as that one, in consequence of which I ceased to see in one of our chambermaids a servant of the female sex, but began to see in her a *woman* upon whom in some degree might depend my tranquillity and happiness. From the time I first recollect myself, I recollect likewise Masha in our house; and never, up to the occurrence I am going to relate, and which altered entirely my impression of her, had I paid the least attention to her. Masha was twenty-five years of age when I was fourteen; she was very beautiful: but I am afraid to give a description of her, lest my imagination should again reproduce to me that bewitching and deceitful image, which occupied it during the time of my passion. Not to deceive anybody, I will limit myself to saying, she was uncommonly fair, splendidly developed, and a woman; and I repeat that I was fourteen years old.

In one of those minutes, when, lesson-in-hand, one is pacing up and down the room, trying to step only on one slit in the floor, humming some disconnected tunes, or repeating vacantly some speech—in short, one of those minutes, when the mind leaves off thinking, and

imagination, gaining the upper hand, longs for new impressions—I left the study, and, without any meaning whatever, turned towards the landing of the staircase.

Somebody in shoes was walking on the second flight of the staircase. Of course I wanted to know who it was; but the noise of the steps ceased abruptly, and I heard Masha's voice: "*Go away!* what nonsense! Why, if Maria Iwanowna happened to come, how would she like it?"

"She will not come," whispered the voice of Woloda.

"Go away, you stupid fellow!" and Masha passed by me running.

I cannot describe to what a degree this discovery confounded me, but the feeling of amazement soon gave way to a fellow-feeling with Woloda's behaviour. I soon no longer wondered at his behaviour itself, but only at his knowing how to behave so agreeably, and involuntarily I wished to imitate him. I walked sometimes for an hour on the landing, without any thought, following with the strictest attention every movement which proceeded from above; but nothing could compel me to imitate Woloda, although I wished it more than anything else in the world. Sometimes, concealing myself behind the door, with a heavy feeling of envy and jealousy, I listened to the bustle which was to be heard from the maidservant's room; and the idea crossed my mind, how it would be were I to go in, and, like Woloda, kiss Masha? What was I to say—I with my large nose and my tuft on the top of the head—when she should ask me what I wanted? Sometimes I heard

how Masha spoke to Woloda, saying, "That's your punishment. Go away! Why, Nicolai Petrowitch never comes here and does such nonsense." Alas! she knew not that Nicolai Petrowitch sat, at the same minute, below on the staircase, and would have given anything he possessed to be in the place of the 'bold fellow Woloda.' I was embarrassed by nature, but this disposition was yet increased by the consciousness of my ugliness. I am convinced that nothing has so striking an influence on the development of man, as his exterior; and not so much the exterior itself, as the belief in its being attractive or not.

I had too much self-love to reconcile myself to my fate. I tried to find comfort, as the fox did, when certifying to itself that the grapes were sour; that is to say, I tried to despise all the satisfaction to be derived from an agreeable exterior, of which, according to my opinion, Woloda availed himself, and which I envied him from my whole heart; and I endeavoured, with all the energy of my intellect and imagination, to find consolation in the pride of loneliness.

CHAPTER VII.

SMALL SHOT.

"GOOD gracious!—powder!" exclaimed Mimi, with a voice trembling from agitation; "what are you doing? you will set the house on fire and ruin us all!" And with an indescribable expression of firmness, Mimi, ordering everyone to stand aside, went with long and decided steps towards the small shot scattered about, and, despising the danger which might arise from an unexpected explosion, began to trample upon it.

When, in her opinion, peril began to diminish, she called Michael and ordered him to throw 'this powder' somewhere far away, or, still better, in the water; and proudly adjusting her cap, she returned to the drawing-room. "They are well looked after, I must confess—" murmured she to herself.

When papa came from his room, and together with us went to grandmama, Mimi sat there at the window, and looked, with a mysterious, official expression, with great gravity towards the door. In her hand was something carefully enveloped in paper. I guessed that this was the small shot, and that grandmama had already been informed. Besides Mimi, there were in the room the maidservant Gasha, who, to judge by her angry flushed face, was highly vexed; and the doctor,

Blumenthal, a little man marked with the small-pox, who endeavoured evidently to tranquillise Gasha, by administering to her, with head and eyes, different secret, pacifying signs. Even grandmama sat a little sideways, and played the game of *Patience*, which they call 'the Traveller,' and which was with her an omen of bad temper not to be mistaken.

"How are you to-day, mama? Had you a good night?" asked papa, kissing her hand respectfully.

"Perfectly well, my dear; you know I am *always* in thorough good health!" answered grandmama, with a tone as though papa's question were completely out of place, and very offensive.

"Will you not give me a clean pocket-handkerchief?" continued she, turning to Gasha.

"I gave it you, madam," replied Gasha, pointing at the snow-white cambric handkerchief laid by her on the arm of the chair.

"No, it's a nasty dirty thing. Take it away and give me a clean one, my dear."

Gasha went to the cupboard and slammed the door of it so violently, that the windows rattled. Grandmama glanced angrily at all of us, and then continued to follow attentively the movements of the servant. When the latter presented her, as I thought, quite the same pocket-handkerchief, grandmama said:

"When will you cut me some tobacco, my dear?"

"When I have time."

"What do you say?"

"I will do it to-day."

"If you don't want to serve me, my dear, you

might as well say so; I would long since have sent you away."

"And if you do so, I shall not cry," murmured the servant.

At this moment the doctor began again to wink at her, but she looked at him so firmly and angrily, that he left off directly and occupied himself with his watch-key.

"You see, my dear," said grandmama, turning to papa, when Gasha, still grumbling, left the room, "how people speak to me in my own house."

"If you please, mama, *I* will cut you some tobacco," observed papa, finding himself apparently in a difficulty with this unexpected promise.

"No, no, thank you; probably she is so cross, partly because she knows very well that nobody but herself can do the tobacco as I like it. "Do you know, my dear," continued she, after a short pause, "that your children nearly set the house on fire to-day!"

Papa looked at grandmama with respectful curiosity.

"Yes, they played with something. Tell him the story," said she to Mimi.

Papa took the small shot in his hand, and could not help smiling.

"But this is small shot, mama, and cannot be at all dangerous," said he.

"I am obliged to you, my dear, for teaching me, only I am rather too old."

"The nerves! the nerves!" whispered the doctor.

Papa directly turned to us and said, "Where did you get it? how dare you play with such things?"

"Don't ask them—rather ask their useless '*uncle*,'" observed grandmama, laying a particular stress upon the word *uncle*. "What is he for?"

"Woloda said that Karl Iwanitsh himself gave him this powder," affirmed Mimi.

"Well, you see for yourself what he is good for," continued grandmama. "And where is he, this '*uncle*,' how can one get hold of him? Send him here."

"I sent him on a visit," said papa.

"This is not wise, he should always be here; the children are not mine, but yours, and I have nothing to do with them, because you are cleverer than I am," said grandmama; "but it seems to me as though it were time to have a regular tutor for them, and not such an '*uncle*,' a German—a stupid fellow who can teach them nothing but rude manners and Tyrolean songs. Is it necessary, I ask you, that the children learn to sing Tyrolean songs? But, after all, there is nobody *now* with whom to speak about it, and you can do as you like."

The word *now* signified "as there is no mother with them," and awakened a sad recollection in grandmama's heart; she cast her eyes on the snuff-box with the portrait, and sighed.

"I thought of this a long while ago!" said papa, eagerly, "and thought of taking your advice about it, mama. Would you like St. Jerome, who now gives them lessons?"

"Oh, I think that will do very well, my friend," replied grandmama, no longer with the same angry tone as before; "St. Jerome is at least a tutor *comme il faut*,

who knows how to train *des enfants de bonne maison*, and not a simple *uncle*, who is good for nothing but to take them for a walk."

"I shall talk to him to-morrow," said papa. And in fact, two days later, Karl Iwanitsh had to relinquish his place to the young Frenchman.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HISTORY OF KARL IWANITSH.

LATE in the evening before that day when Karl Iwanitsh had to leave us for ever, he stood, in his wadded robe-de-chambre and red cap, in his room near the bed, and bending over a trunk, carefully packed his things up.

The behaviour of Karl Iwanitsh towards us had of late been particularly cool, he seemed to avoid every contact with us. Thus now, when I entered the room, he just glanced at me from below, and then continued his occupation. I jumped on his bed; but Karl Iwanitsh, who formerly used to forbid that, said not a word; and the idea that he would no longer scold nor absolve us, that he would no longer have anything to do with us, reminded me vividly of the approaching separation. I was sad that he no longer loved us, and I wanted to shew him this feeling.

"Will you allow me to help you, Karl Iwanitsh?" said I, approaching him.

He looked at me and again turned away; but by the look of suffering which he cast at me, I understood that his coldness proceeded not from indifference, but from sincere and concentrated grief.

"God sees everything and knows everything," said

he, raising himself to his full height and sighing deeply. "Yes! Nikolinka," continued he, observing the expression of sincere compassion with which I looked at him, "my fate was an unhappy one from the cradle, and will be so to the grave. For the good I have done to people I have always been paid by evil; my reward is not here, but it will be there!" said he, pointing to heaven. "If you knew my whole story, how much I have endured in this life—I have been a boot-maker, a soldier, a deserter, a manufacturer, a teacher, and now —I am nothing! and, like the Son of God, I have not where to lay my head!" and he covered his eyes with his hand and sat down on a chair.

Observing that Karl Iwanitsh was in that sensitive disposition of mind, in which he, without paying attention to the listener, told to himself his innermost thoughts, I was silent, and watching his kind face, sat down upon the bed.

"You are no longer a child; you can now understand, and I will tell you my whole story, and all that I have undergone. Sometimes, children, you will recollect the old friend who loved you so much—"

Karl Iwanitsh leaned his arm on the table near him, snuffed some tobacco, and, directing his eyes towards heaven, began in that peculiar, measured, gurgling tone, with which he used to dictate our lessons to us, the narrative of his life.

As he told me this afterwards many times, always in the same order, with exactly the same expressions and unchangeable intonations, I hope to render it almost literally, with the innumerable faults of language

he committed when speaking Russian. Whether this were really his history, or a production of his imagination during the time of his solitary existence in our house, and which he at last himself believed from having repeated it so often; or whether he adorned with some imaginary facts the real course of his life, I have never been able to make out. On one hand, there was too much of deep feeling and methodical unity in his recitals for one not to believe them; and, on the other hand, the abundance of poetical beauty which they contained, was apt to excite some doubts in the mind.

"Me vere very unhappy from se time of my birth, *das Unglück verfolgte mich schon im Schoose meiner Mutter*," repeated he, with a profound sigh. "Se noble blot of se countis of Somerblat flows in my veins! *in meinen Adern fliesst das edle Blut der Grafen von Somerblat!* Me vere born six veek after se wetting. Se man of my *Mutter* (I called him 'papa') vere farmer to se count von Somerblat. He coult not forget my *Mutter's* shame ant loaft me not. I had a youngster broser *Johann* ant two sister; pot me vere strange petween my own family! *Ich war ein Fremder in meiner eignen Familie!* Ven Johann mate several silly trick, papa sayt, 'Wit sis chilt Karl, I am never to have one moment tranquil!' ant sen he scoltet and ponishet me. Ven se sister quarrellet among itselves, papa sayt, 'Karl will never be one opedient poy!' ant still scoltet ant ponishet me! My goot mama alone loaft ant tenteret me. Often she sayt to me, 'Karl, come in my room!' and sere she kisset me secretly. 'Poorly, poorly, Karl!' sayt she; 'nopoty loaf you, pot I will not exchange

you for somepoty in se worlt. One sing your *Mutter* pegs you to rememper,' sayt she to me: 'Learn vell ant are ever one honest man, sen Got will not forsake you! *trachte nur ein ehrlicher Deutsher zu werden'—sagte sie—'und der liebe Gott wird dich nicht verlassen!*' Ant I triet so to become. Ven my forteen year hat expiret, ant me coult partake of se Holy sopper, my Moser sayt to my Faser, 'Karl is one pig poy now, Kustaf; vat shall we to wis him?' Ant papa sayt, 'Me ton't know.' Sen mama sayt, 'Let we give him to town at Mister Schultzen's, he may pe a shoemaker;' ant my Faser sayt, 'Goot!' '*und Vater sagte, gut.*' Six years more seven mons, livet I in town wis se Mister Shoemaker, and he loaft me. He sayt, 'Karl are one goot vorkman, ant shall soon become my *Geselle!*' pot—man makes se proposition ant Got se deposition—in se year 1796 one *Conscription* took place, ant each, which vas serviceable, from se eightiens to se twenty-first year, hat to go at town.

"My Faser ant my broser *Johann* come at town, ant we go togeser to srow se *Loos*, which shoult pe *Soldat*. *Johann* tragget se fatalic nomper, me was not necessary to pe *Soldat*. Ant papa sayt, 'I have only one son, ant wis it shall I separate? *Ich habe einen einzigen Sohn, und von diesem muss ich mich trennen?*'

"I take his hant ant says, 'Why say you so, papa? Come wis me ant I will say you somesing!' And papa come, ant we seat togeser at se publics house, ant me sayt, 'Vaiter, give us one *Bierkrug!*' ant he gives us one. We trink altogeser, and broser Johann also trink. 'Papa,' sayt me, 'ton't say so sat you have only one

son ant wis it you must separate; my heart was breaking ven you say sis; broser *Johann* must not serve, me shall pe *Soldat.* Karl are for nopoty necessary, and Karl shall pe *Soldat.*'

"'You is one honest man, Karl!' sayt papa, ant kiss me. '*Du bist ein ehrlicher Bursche!*' *sagte mein Vater und küsste mich.* Ant me was *Soldat.*"

CHAPTER IX.

CONTINUATION OF THE NARRATIVE.

"SAT was a terrible time, Nikolinka," continued Karl Iwanitsh, "se time of Napoleon! He wanted to conquer Germany, ant we protected our *Vaterland* to se last trop of plot! *und wir vertheidigten unser Vaterland bis auf den letzten Tropfen Blut.* Me vere at Ulm, me vere at Austerlitz, me vere at Wagram! *ich war bei Wagram.*"

"Is it possible that you fought also?" asked I, looking at him with astonishment; "is it possible that *you* ever killed anybody?"

Karl Iwanitsh tranquillised me instantly in this respect.

"Once one Frans Grenadier was left behint ant fell to se grount. I sprang forvarts wis my gon ant vere about to kill him, *aber der Franzose warf sein Gewehr hin und rief: pardon!* ant I let him loose.

"At Wagram Napoleon cut us open and sorrountet us in such a way as sere was no helping. Sree days hat we no provisions, ant stoot in se water op to se knees. Se evil Napoleon neiser let us go loose nor catchet us! *und der Bösewicht Napoleon wollte uns nicht gefangen nehmen und auch nicht frei lassen!*

"On se fours day, sey took us prisoners, sank Got,

ant sent us at one fortresses. Upon me was one blue trousers, uniforms of very vell clos (very good cloth), fifteen of *Thalers* of money ant one silver o'clock, which my Faser had give me. Se Frans *Soldat* tooket everysing from me. For my happiness sere was sree tucats on me which my mama hat sown in my chemise of flanelle. Not any poty fount sem!

"I liket not long to stay in se fortresses, ant resoluted to ron away. Once a tay, one pig holitay, says I to the sergeant which hat to look after us, 'Mister sergeant, to-tay is a pig holitay, me wants to celepration it. Pring here, if you please, two pottle Mateira ant we shall trink sem wis each oser.' Ant se sergeant says, 'goot!' Ven se sergeant pring se Mateira ant we trink it out to se last trop, I taket his hant ant says, 'Mister sergeant, perhaps you have still one *Vater* ant one *Mutter?*' He says, 'So have I, Mister Mayer!' 'My faser ant moser seen me not eight year,' says I to him, 'and sey know not am I yet lively or is my bones reposing in se grave. Oh Mister sergeant! I have two tucats which was in my chemise of flanelle, take sem ant let me loose! you will pe my penefactress, ant my moser will praying for you along her life to se allmighty Got.'

"Se sergeant emptiet his glass Mateira ant says, 'Mister Mayer, me loaf and compassion you very moch! pot you is one prisoner ant me one *Soldat!*' So take I his hant ant says, 'Mister sergeant!' *ich drückte ihm die Hand und sagte, 'Herr sergeant!'*

"Ant se sergeant says, 'You is one poor man, ant me will not take your money, pot me will help you.

Ven I go sleep, puy one pail of pranty for se *Soldaten* ant se will sleep. Me will not look after you!' Sis was one goot man. I puyet se pail of pranty, ant ven se *Soldaten* was trunken, me tresset in one olt coat ant gang in silence out of se door.

"I go to se wall ant will leap town, pot sere is water pelow, ant me will not spoil my last tressing, so I go to se gate.

"Se *Schildwache* go up ant town wis one gon ant look at me. '*Qui vive? sagte er auf einmal,*' ant me was silent. '*Qui vive? sagte er zum zweitenmal,*' ant me was silent. '*Qui vive? sagte er zum drittenmal,*' ant me ron away. I sprung in se water, climp op to se oser site, ant walk on.

"Se entire night I ron on se way, pot ven taylight came me were afrait sat sey woult catch me, ant I hit myself in se high corn. Sere I kneelet town, sanket se Faser of heaven for my safety, and fall sleep wis a tranquil feeling. *Ich dankte dem allmächtigen Gott für seine Barmherzigkeit und mit beruhigtem Gefühl schlief ich ein!*

"I wakenet op in se evening ant gang furser. At once one large German carriage, wis two raven-black horse, came along me. In se carriage seatet one well tresset man, smoke one pipe ant look at me. Me go slowly sat se carriage shall have times to pass me, pot me go slowly ant se carriage go slowly, ant se man look at me; me go quick ant se carriage go quick, ant se man stops its two horse ant look at me. 'Young man,' says he, 'where go you of late?' I says, 'Me go to Francfort!'—'Seat in se carriage, sere is room

enough, ant I will tragg you,' says he. 'Why have you nosing about you? your boot are dirty ant your beart not shaving.' I seated wis him ant says: 'I is one poor man, I woult like to pusy myself wis somesing on a manufactory; my tressing is dirty because I fell in se mod on se roat.'

"'You tell me untruse, young man,' says he, 'se roat is quite try now.'

"Ant I were silent.

"'Tell me se whole truse,' says se goot man, 'which you are, ant where you go to? I like your face, ant ven you is one honest man, so will I help you.'

"Ant I tell it all. He says: 'Goot, young man; come to my manufactory of string, me shall give you work, tress, money, ant you can live wis os.'

"Ant I says, 'goot.'

"I go to se manufactory of string, ant se goot man says to its woman: 'Sere is one young man which defented its *Vaterland* and ron away from prisons; he has not one house, nor tresses, nor preat. He will live wis os. Give him clean linen ant norish him.' I livet one ant one half year in se manufactory of string, ant my lantlort loaft me so moch sat he woult not let me loose. Ant me feelet very goot.

"I were sen one beautiful man, young, of pig stature, blue eyes, *römische* nose,—ant Missis L— (me like not to say its name), se woman of my lantlort, were one young, hantsome laty. And she fell in loaf wis me."

* * * * * *

Here Karl Mayer made a long pause, cast down his kind blue eyes, softly shook his head, and smiled as

people do smile under the impression of an agreeable recollection.

"Yes," said he, resuming his tale, leaning back in his arm-chair and adjusting his *robe-de-chambre*, "I experiencet many sings in my life, pot sere is my witness," (and he pointed at an image of the Saviour, embroidered in wool and hanging over his bed). "Nopoty in se worlt can say sat Karl Iwanitsh has been one dishonest man. Me would not pay blackenet ingratitude for se goot which Mister L—— dit me, ant I resoluted to ron away of him. Se evening, ven all were gone sleep, I writet one letter to my lantlort ant lay it at se table in its room, taket my tresses, sree *Thaler* of money, ant go mysteriously on se street. Nopoty have seen me, ant me go on se roat."

CHAPTER X.

CONTINUATION.

"I HAS not seen my mama for nine year, ant I know not lives she or are her bones long since in se dark grave. I go in my country. Ven I come in se town, me ask, 'Where live Kustaf Mayer which have been farmer from se Count von Somerblat?' Sey answer me, '*Graf Somerblat* are deat, ant Kustaf Mayer live now in se pig street, ant keep one public's house.' I tress in my new waistcoat, one noble coat which se manufactorist presentet me, arranget my hairs nice, ant go to se public's house of my papa. Sister *Mariechen** seat on one pench and ask me which I want? I says, 'Might me trink one glass of pranty?' Ant she says, '*Vater*, one young man wish to trink one glass of pranty.' Ant papa says, 'Give him se glass.' I seat to se table, trink my glass pranty, smoke my pipe, ant look at papa, *Mariechen*, ant *Johann*, which came also in se shop. Between se conversation papa says, 'You know perhaps, young man, where stant our army?' I says, 'Me came self from se army, and he stants now at *Wien*.' 'Our son,' says papa, 'are *Soldat*, ant now is it nine years he wrote never one wort, ant we know

* Diminutive of Maria.

not is he lively or is he deat. My woman always cry over him.'—I still fumigate my pipe, ant says, 'Which were your son's name, and where servet he? perhaps me know him.' Its name was *Karl Mayer*, ant he servet in se '*Austrian Jägers.*' 'He were of pig stature, ant one beautiful man like you,' says sister *Mariechen.* I says, 'Me know your *Karl.*'—'*Amalia,*' exclaimet my faser, 'come here; sere is one young man which know our *Karl!*' Ant my peloaft moser come out from one back door. I know her directly! 'You know our *Karl?*' says she, ant look at me, and all white, tremples. 'Yes, me saw him!' says I, wisout having corage to look at her; my heart would almost borst. 'My *Karl* is lively? sank Got!' says mama; 'where is he, my *Karl?* I woult tie in peace if me coult see him pot once more, my darling son! pot Got will not have it so;' ant she criet—me coult no longer stant it. 'Darling ma'!' says I, 'me is your *Karl!*'—and she fell into my arms!"

Karl Iwanitsh covered his eyes, and his lips trembled.

"'*Mutter!*' *sagte ich,* '*ich bin ihr Sohn, ich bin ihr Karl!*' *und sie stürtzte mir in die Arme,*'" repeated he, recovering a little, and wiping away the tears which fell from his eyes.

"Pot God did not wish me to finish my tay in my native town. I were porsuit by fate! *das Unglück verfolgte mich überall!* I livet in my native town only sree mons. One sontay I seat in one coffee-house, me trinket one pint of beer, fumigated my pipe, ant speaket wis some frients of *Politik,* of se Emperor *Franz,* of Napoleon, of se war—ant anypoty sayt its opinion. Next to us seats one strange chentleman in one grey

Uberrock, trinks coffee, fumigates one pipe, ant says nosing. *Er rauchte sein Pfeifchen und schwieg still.* Ven the *Nachtwächter* screamet ten o'clock, I taket my hat, pay se money, ant go home. In half night some one knock at se door. I rise ant says, 'Which is sere?' '*Macht auf.*' Me says, 'first says which is sere ant me will open.' '*Macht auf im Namen des Gesetzes,*' says it behint se door. I now open. Two *Soldat* wis gons stant at se door, ant into se room steps se man in one grey *Uberrock* which seat with os in se coffee-house. He were *Spion! Es war ein Spion.* 'Go wis me,' says se *Spion.* 'Very goot,' says I. Me tresset in boots, trousers, ant coats, ant go srough se room. Ven I come to se wall where my gon hangs, me take it ant says, 'You is one *Spion*, tefent you! *du bist ein Spion vertheidige dich!*' I give one stroke left, one stroke right, ant one on se heat. Se *Spion* precipitated on se floor! sen I taket my cloak-bag, my money, ant jompet out of se wintow. *Ich kam nach Ems*, sere I acquainted wis one General Sasin. He loaft me, givet me one passport from se ambassy, ant taket me to *Russland* to learn its chiltren. Ven General Sasin tiet, your mama callet for me, ant says, 'Karl Iwanitsh, I give you my chiltren; loaf them, and me will never leave you, and take carefulness upon your olt tay!' Now she is teat, ant all is forget! For my twenty year full of service, me most now go into se street ant seek for one try crump of preat for my olt tay.—Got see all sis, ant know all sis! Its Holy will shall be tone!—Only you sorries me, chiltren!'" concluded Karl Iwanitsh, drawing me softly to him, and kissing me on the forehead.

CHAPTER XI.

ONE, 'ONLY ONE.'

AFTER the lapse of the mourning year, grandmama recovered a little from her distress, and began again receiving guests from time to time, particularly children of the same age as ourselves.

On Lubotshka's birthday, the 13th of December, the princess Kornakoff with her daughters, Madame Walachin with Sonitska, Ilinka Grap and the two youngest Iwins, came early to our house before dinner.

The sounds of conversation, laughter, and steps were to be heard from the drawing-room, but we could not join the party before the termination of our morning classes. On the lesson-board in the class-room stood, *Lundi de* 2 *à* 3 *maître d' Histoire et de Geographie!* and this unlucky *maître d' Histoire* we were obliged to wait for, to listen to, and to see the back of, before we could be at liberty. It was already twenty minutes past two, and the teacher was not yet to be heard, nor even to be seen in the street, which I looked up and down with the greatest impatience, and a distinct wish never to see him again.

"It seems that he is not coming to-day," said Woloda, looking up for a moment from the book in which he was learning his lesson.

"Please the Lord!—moreover—I know nothing—however—there!—I do believe he is coming," added I, in a melancholy tone.

"Not yet—it is a *gentleman!*" said Woloda, looking out of the window. "Let us wait till half-past, and then ask St. Jerome to take away the books."

"And wish him a good journey!" sighed I, stretching out both my hands over my head, together with the book they held. Having hitherto idled away my time, I now opened my book just at the place where the lesson began, and took to learning it. The lesson was long and difficult; moreover I was in that disposition of mind when thoughts refuse to stop at any object whatever, and consequently learnt nothing of it. After the last lesson of history, which always seemed to me the most difficult and tiresome subject, the teacher had complained of me to St. Jerome, and in the register I had only two good marks, which was very little. St. Jerome thereupon told me that, if in the next lesson I should have less than three, he would severely punish me. Now this next lesson was at hand, and I confess I was much alarmed at it.

I had been so absorbed by reading the totally unknown lesson, that the sound of overshoes taken off in the anteroom much struck me. I had yet hardly time to look up, when in the doorway appeared the slavish and to me very disgusting face, and the too well-known figure of the master in his blue dress-coat with yellow buttons.

He slowly laid down his hat and books, adjusted the plaits of his coat, (as though this had been in the least necessary!) and solemnly sat down in his place.

"Well, gentlemen," said he, rubbing his hands, "let us first repeat the general contents of the last lesson, and then I will proceed to narrate to you the succeeding events of the middle ages."

This meant—"Say your lesson!"

Whilst Woloda was answering him with the entire freedom and confidence of one who well knows his subject, I, without the least aim, went on the staircase; and since I was not allowed to go downstairs, what could be more natural than that I should unconsciously turn to the resting-place on the staircase! But before I could establish myself here in my usual observatory behind the door, Mimi—the continual cause of my misfortunes—rushed upon me. "*You* here!" said she, looking severely at me; then at the maidservant's door, and then again at me.

I felt myself thoroughly guilty, first because I was not in the class, and secondly because I was in this forbidden place; therefore I was silent, and, drooping my head, assumed the most touching expression of repentance.

"No indeed, this is too bad!" said Mimi; "what are you doing here?" I was silent. "The thing must not rest here," continued she, beating the staircase rail with her yellow fingers; "I shall tell it to the countess."

It was five minutes to three when I returned into the class-room. The master, as though not aware either of my absence or presence, was explaining to Woloda the new lesson. When he, having done this, put the books together, and Woloda went in the other room to fetch his ticket, the consoling idea came into my mind, that all was over and he had forgotten me.

But suddenly he turned to me with a malicious smile, and said, rubbing his hands, "I hope you have learnt your lesson?"

"Yes!" replied I.

"Can you be so kind as to tell me something about the crusade of St. Lewis?" said he, balancing himself on his chair and looking gravely at his feet. "Firstly, tell me something about the reasons which induced the French king to assume the cross," (now raising his eyebrows and pointing with his finger at the inkstand); "then explain to me the general characteristics of this crusade," (now making a gesture with the whole hand as if he would seize something in it); "and lastly the influence of this crusade on the European States in general," (drawing the copybooks to the left side of the table,) "and on the French state in particular," (drawing them to the right and inclining his head in the same direction).

I swallowed several times, coughed, bent down, and was silent. Then, taking up a pen from the table, I began to prick at it and continued silent.

"Allow me the pen—I shall want it," said the teacher. "Well?"

"Le-wis—ki—Lewis the—Saint—was—was—a—ve-ry good and wise king."

"What?"

"King; he thought of going to Jerusalem, and gave the *reins of government* to his mother."

"What was her name?"

"B-b-b-lanka."

"What? Be-lanka?"

I laughed in a somewhat forced manner.

"Well, do you not know a little more?" said he smiling.

I had nothing to lose—I began to chatter everything that came into my head. The master was silent, gathered together with his finger the remains of the pen I had left on the table, looked gravely past my ear at the wall, and repeated, "Very well, very well!" I felt that I knew nothing, expressed myself quite wrongly, and was dreadfully mortified that he neither interrupted nor corrected me.

"Why did he think of going to Jerusalem?" asked he at last, repeating my words.

"Because—that—however—why?"—

I was completely confused, said not a word more, and felt that, although this disagreeable teacher might continue for a whole year to put questions and to look at me inquiringly, yet I should not be able to pronounce one single syllable. He stared at me for about three minutes, and then a sudden expression of deep sadness came over his face; he said, in a voice of emotion, to Woloda, who re-entered the room—

"Allow me the register,—I will write my remarks."

He opened the book thoughtfully, and, with the most exquisite calligraphy, marked *five* for Woloda for diligence, and also for good behaviour. Then, stopping the pen at the line where my report had to stand, he looked at me and reflected. Suddenly his hand made a decisive movement, and on my place stood a well-marked *one*, with a stop; another movement, and in the line of behaviour, another *one*, with a stop. Quietly

shutting the book, the teacher stood up and went to the door as if he did not see my look, which expressed at the same time entreaty, despair, and reproach.

"Michael Larionitsh!" said I.

"No!" replied he, as if knowing already what I was going to say, "it is impossible to learn in this way; I will not earn my money for nothing."

He put on his overshoes and his cloak, and slowly tied a scarf round his neck. How could he care for such trifles after what had happened with me? To him it was a mere stroke of the pen—to me the greatest misfortune.

"Is the class over?" said St. Jerome, entering.

"Yes."

"Was the teacher satisfied with you?"

"Yes."

"How many have you?"

"Five."

"And Nicola?"

I was silent.

"I think four," said Woloda.

He understood that I must be saved at least for to-day. If there must be punishment it should not be when we had guests.

"*Voyons Messieurs!*" (St. Jerome was in the habit of continually saying 'voyons!') "*faites votre toilette et descendons.*"

CHAPTER XII.

THE KEY.

WE had hardly descended and welcomed the guests, when dinner was announced. Papa was in high spirits (he had been winning for some time); he had presented Lubotshka with a silver service, and after dinner suddenly remembered that he had forgotten a box with sweetmeats, which she was to have likewise.

"Why send a man? it is better that you go, Coco," said he, jokingly, to me; "the keys are on the table, you know, in the tray. Take them, and with the largest open the second drawer on the right. There you will find the box and the sweetmeats. Bring it all together here."

"Shall I also bring cigars for you?" said I, knowing that he always smoked after dinner.

"Do; but don't touch anything else."

Finding the keys, I was about to obey the order, when the desire seized me to know to which object the smallest of the keys in the bunch belonged.

On the table, among many other things, was a portfolio with a padlock, and I was curious to see whether the key was meant for this. The attempt was crowned with success; the portfolio opened and was full of papers. Curiosity so strongly urged me to know what these

papers contained, that the voice of conscience was hushed, and I began to read what was in the portfolio. . . . . The childish feeling of unlimited respect towards elder persons, and in particular towards papa, was so strong in me, that my reason involuntarily refused to draw any conclusions from what I had seen. I felt as though papa were living in a sphere completely apart, excellent, incomprehensible, and unattainable for me; and the attempt to criticise the secrets of his life would have been something like sacrilege on my part.

For this reason, the discovery which I made in papa's portfolio left no clear impression on my mind, except a dim consciousness that I had behaved ill. I felt ashamed and confused.

Under the influence of this feeling, I wanted to shut the portfolio again as quick as possible, but I was destined to experience every kind of adversity on this unlucky day. Putting the key in the padlock, I turned it round, but not in the right direction: thinking that the portfolio was locked, I drew out the key, but—oh horror!—I held only the top of the key in my hand. In vain did I try to put the two halves together and to get out the part sticking in the padlock—I was obliged to submit at last to the dreadful thought that I had committed a new crime, which would even to-day be discovered at papa's return to his cabinet.

Mimi's accusation—then that '*one*'—then the key! Nothing worse *could* happen! Grandmama, in consequence of Mimi's denunciation, St. Jerome for the solitary '*one*,' and papa for the key,—all was to come upon me no later than this evening!

"What will become of me? Oh, what have I done?" said I, aloud, stepping to and fro on the soft carpet. "Well," exclaimed I, with a sudden resolution, "*what must come must!*"—and taking up the sweetmeats and the cigars, I ran back to the other part of the house.

This fatalistic sentence, heard from Nicola repeatedly in my childhood, produced in all the difficult hours of my life a beneficial, momentarily quieting influence upon me. Entering the drawing-room, I felt in a somewhat excited and unnatural, but exceedingly gay disposition of mind.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TRAITRESS.

AFTER dinner we began to play at round games, and I took a most lively part in them. Playing at 'Cat and Mouse,' I ran a little awkwardly against the governess of the Kornakoffs who played with us, unfortunately stepped on her dress and made a hole in it. Observing that all the girls, particularly Sonitshka, shewed the greatest satisfaction at seeing the governess, with an expression of vexation, go in the maidservant's room to mend her dress, I resolved to procure them the satisfaction a second time. In consequence of this amiable resolution, I, so soon as the governess returned to the room, began to gallop around her, and continued these evolutions up to a favourable moment for again stepping upon and tearing her dress with my heel. Sonitshka and the princesses could hardly help bursting out laughing, which excited my self-love yet more; but St. Jerome, having probably remarked my tricks, came up to me, and frowning (which I could not bear), said that I seemed disposed to mischief, and that if I could not be more moderate he should be obliged to send me away.

But I was in the desperate disposition of a man who, gambling for more than he has in his pocket, and being

afraid of making up his account, continues to lay on the unlucky cards, no longer with the hope of winning again what he has lost, but because he will not have time to consider. I laughed impertinently, and left him.

After Cat and Mouse followed another game, where the gentlemen sit on one side and the ladies on the other, on two rows of chairs, and choose each other in turns. The youngest princess chose always the youngest Iwin, Katenka either Woloda or Ilinka, Sonitshka every time Seriosha, and, to my extreme astonishment, seemed not at all embarrassed when he went straight up to her and sat down near her. She laughed with her sweet musical laugh, and made a sign with her head that he was right. Nobody chose me. To the utmost vexation of my self-love, I found myself the one remaining over, and heard how they asked, "Who is left out?—Nikolinka!—Well, do take him!"—and therefore, when my turn came to guess who had chosen me, I went either to my sister or one of the elder ugly princesses, and, unfortunately, was never mistaken. Sonitshka seemed so absorbed by Seriosha, that I no longer existed for her; I don't know why I called her *traitress* in my thoughts, for she never gave me a promise to choose me and not Seriosha, but I was firmly convinced that she behaved to me in the most abominable manner. After the game, I observed how the traitress, from whom, however, I could not turn away my eyes, went, together with Seriosha and Katenka, in a corner, talking secretly about something. Stealing softly under the piano, which concealed their secrets, I saw the following: Katenka held up a cambric

pocket-handkerchief at two corners so as to form a screen for the two heads of Sonitshka and Seriosha. "No, you have lost, you must pay the wager!" said Seriosha. Sonitshka stood before him like a criminal, blushed, and replied, "No, I did not lose—is it not true, Mademoiselle Katherine?" "I love the truth," answered Katenka; "you lost the wager, my dear." Hardly had Katenka said so, when Seriosha embraced and kissed Sonitshka right on her rosy lips. And Sonitshka smiled as if it were nothing, only very pleasant. Dreadful!—oh artful traitress!

CHAPTER XIV.

THE ECLIPSE.

I FELT suddenly a strong contempt for the female sex in general, and for Sonitshka in particular; I began to observe that there was nothing gay in these plays, that they were only amusing for *girls;* I wanted to be very noisy and to do something of such an extraordinary boldness, that all would be obliged to admire it. The opportunity came soon. St. Jerome, after having talked with Mimi, went out of the room. I heard his steps first on the staircase, then upstairs in the class-room. The idea occurred to me that Mimi had told him her story of having seen me on the staircase, and that he went now to look at the register. At that time I imputed to St. Jerome no other aim in life but that of offending me. I have read somewhere that children of about twelve or fourteen years of age, that is, at the time of passing from childhood to youth, are often inclined to incendiarism, or even murder. Remembering my youth, and particularly the disposition of mind I was in, on this (for me) unlucky day, I understand completely the possibility of these most terrible crimes committed without any aim, without the wish of doing wrong; but just out of curiosity—from the unconscious demand for action. There are moments when

the future appears to man in such a gloomy hue, that he is afraid of fixing his mind's eye upon it, restrains within himself all intellectual activity, and tries to persuade himself that the future will not be, and the past has never been. At such moments, when thought does not shrink from any manifestation of the will, and the carnal instincts remain the only springs of life, I understand completely that a child—from want of experience, particularly inclined to those dispositions—may, without the least fear or shrinking, nay, indeed, with the smile of curiosity, set fire to his own house, in which his parents, his brothers and sisters—whom yet he tenderly loves—are asleep. Under the influence of this momentary absence of thought—almost absence of mind—the peasant boy of seventeen years of age, looking at the edge of the newly-sharpened axe, near the bench on which—his face turned downwards—his old father sleeps, suddenly raises the axe, and, with unconscious curiosity, sees how the blood rushes down on the floor from the wound in the neck. Under the influence of this absence of thought, this instinctive curiosity, man finds a certain delight in standing at the very brink of an abyss, and thinking, 'How if I were to throw myself into it?' or holding to his brow a loaded pistol, asking, 'If I discharged it?' or seeing a very important person, for whom a whole society shews the utmost respect, feels inclined to go, shake it by the nose and say, 'Well, my dear, how do you do?'

Under the influence, then, of this instinctive agitation and absence of thought—when St. Jerome came down and told me that I had no right to be here to-day,

having behaved and learned so badly, and that I must go upstairs, I showed him my tongue, and said that I would not go.

At the first moment, from astonishment and anger, St. Jerome was unable to utter a word.

"*C'est bien,*" said he, running after me. "Several times already I have promised you a punishment, from which your grandmama has always saved you; but now I see that there is nothing but the rod which will teach you to obey, and to-day you shall enjoy it."

This was said so loud that everyone heard it. The blood rushed with dreadful vehemence to my heart; I felt it violently beating, felt the colour rising to my cheeks, and my lips trembling. I was probably terrible at this moment, for St. Jerome, avoiding my look, stepped quickly forward and caught my hand; but hardly did I feel his touch upon me, than I, not knowing anything from fury, pulled it from him, and with all my childish might struck him.

"What are you doing?" said Woloda, who had approached me, and with alarm and astonishment seen my behaviour.

"Leave me!" exclaimed I, with tears now flowing; "not one of you loves me, understands how miserable I am! All of you are odious and disgusting," said I bluntly, turning to the company.

But at this moment St. Jerome, with a pale but decided face, approached me again, and before I could think of defence, with a quick movement, he took hold of both my hands like a pair of tongs, and dragged me away. My head swam from agitation. I recollect

only, that as long as I had strength to do it, I fought with head and legs; I remember that my nose knocked several times against some knees; that my teeth tore some coat; that I heard all around the presence of many feet, and that I smelled the dust, and the scent of *violette*, with which St. Jerome used to perfume himself.

Five minutes later the door of the storeroom closed behind me.

"Basil!" said his detestable triumphant voice, "bring the rod."

CHAPTER XV.

DREAMS.

WAS it possible at that hour to think I could survive all the misfortunes which befel me on this day, and that there ever would be a time when I should composedly remember them?

Thinking of what I had done, I could not imagine what had been the matter with me; but I felt with despair that I was irrevocably lost.

At first the most complete tranquillity prevailed around me—at least it appeared so to me when compared with the strong inward agitation that I had just experienced; by-and-bye, however, I began to distinguish different sounds. Basil brought something down which he laid upon the chest; it sounded like a broom. Below I heard the ill-tempered voice of St. Jerome (probably speaking of me), then children's voices, then laughter and steps; and some minutes later everything in the house went on in its usual course, as though nobody knew or thought that I was sitting in the dark storeroom.

I did not cry, but something heavy like a stone lay upon my heart. Thoughts and images passed with extraordinary rapidity through my troubled imagination, but the recollection of the misfortune which had befallen

me broke continually through their fantastic chain, and I entered again into an interminable labyrinth of conjecture about the punishment, the fate and despair awaiting me. The idea crossed my mind that there must be some reason or other for this general dislike, nay even contempt, which I fancied that I experienced from others. (I was at that moment firmly convinced that every one, from grandmama down to the coachman Philip, despised me, and found satisfaction in my sufferings.) The idea struck me that I was perhaps not the son of my mother and my father, not the brother of Woloda, but some unfortunate orphan, a foundling taken up by compassion; and this stupid thought not only afforded me a melancholy consolation, but it seemed even quite probable. It was more comfortable to think that I was unhappy, not on account of my own guilt, but because it was my fate to be so even from my birth, and I thought that my destiny was very much like that of poor Karl Iwanitsh. "But why any longer conceal the secret when I myself discovered it?" thought I. "Tomorrow I shall go to papa and say to him, 'It is in vain that you conceal from me the secret of my birth; I know it.'" He will say, "What is to be done, my friend? sooner or later you must know it: you are not my son, but I adopted you as such, and if you remain worthy of my love I will not abandon you." And I shall answer him, "Papa—although I have no right to call you by this name, which I now for the last time pronounce—I have loved you always, and shall continue to do so. I can never forget that you are my benefactor, but I can no longer stay in your house. Here nobody

loves me, and St. Jerome has brought about my ruin. Either he or I must leave your house, because I cannot answer for myself; I hate this man to such a degree that I am capable of anything; I shall kill him." Papa will entreat me, but I shall wave my hand and say, "No, my friend, my benefactor! we cannot live together—let me go!" and I shall embrace him and say in French, "*Oh mon père, oh mon bienfaiteur, donne moi, pour la dernière fois, ta bénédiction, et que la volonté de Dieu soit faite!*" And I, sitting on a trunk in the dark storeroom, sobbed bitterly at these thoughts; but suddenly recollecting the shameful punishment awaiting me, reality brought me back to this world, and the dreams had vanished. Then again I began to fancy myself already far away from our house, alone in the world; I enter a hussar regiment and go to war. Surrounded by enemies on all sides, I wave my sword, and kill one, wound another—a third—a fourth. At last, exhausted by loss of blood and fatigue, I fall on the ground and call "Victory!" The general comes to see me and asks, "Where is our saviour?" They shew me to him; he embraces me, and exclaims with tears of joy, "Victory!" I recover, and, my arm tied up with a black handkerchief, I walk on the boulevards of Iwer. I am a general. I meet the emperor, and he asks, "Who is this wounded young man?" He is told that this is the well-known hero Nicola! The emperor approaches me and says, "My blessing on you! I will grant you anything you ask for!" I bow respectfully, and, leaning on my sword, reply, "I am happy, august Emperor, that I have been able to shed my blood for

my fatherland; and I should have wished to die for it; but if you are so generous as to be willing to grant my wish, I will venture to ask you for one thing—allow me to annihilate my enemy, the foreigner St. Jerome!" And then I fiercely step before St. Jerome and say, "You were the cause of my misfortune; down on your knees!" But this suddenly recals to my mind that the real St. Jerome may at any moment enter with the rod, and again I see myself no longer a general saving his country, but an unhappy, pitiable creature.

The idea of God recurred to me, and I asked Him boldly, "Why He thus punished me?" I had never forgotten to pray either morning or evening. I can positively say that the first step towards religious doubt which besieged me during my youth was made in that hour; not that misfortune had aroused me to disbelief and murmuring; but the idea of the injustice of Providence came upon me at those moments of complete inward contrition and solitude, as bad seed, falling after rain upon the wet land, takes root with extraordinary rapidity. I imagined further that I should die on the spot, and I fancied in the liveliest way the surprise of St. Jerome, when, entering the storeroom, he should find a corpse instead of me. And then, recollecting in the recital of Natalia Sawishna about the forty days during which the souls of the departed yet linger in their home, I imagined how I would fly invisibly through all the rooms of grandmama's house, see the sincere tears of Lubotshka, hear the complaints of grandmama and the conversation between papa and St. Jerome. "He was a fine boy," would papa say,

with tears in his eyes. "Yes," would St. Jerome answer, "but a sad scapegrace—good for nothing!" "You should respect the dead," would papa reply; "you were the cause of his death—you frightened him; he could not stand the humiliation with which you threatened him—away from me, criminal!" And St. Jerome would then fall on his knees and beg forgiveness. After the forty days my soul would fly to heaven; there I should see something wonderfully beautiful, white and transparent, and feel that it was mama.

This something would surround and caress me, but I should feel troubled and not know her! "If it be you," say I, "shew yourself more distinctly that I may embrace you." And her voice answers me, "Do you not feel happy thus?" "Yes, I do, but you cannot stroke me and I cannot kiss your hand." "That is not necessary, here is happiness without that," she says. I feel indeed that it is so, and we ascend together higher and higher; but suddenly I feel as if I were thrown down and—I find myself again on the trunk in the dark storeroom, my cheeks wet with tears, my thoughts confused, and yet repeating the words, "*We ascend together higher and higher!*" It was a long while before I could recollect what my situation was; my mental eye saw in the present moment only a dark, dreadful, limitless distance. I tried to return to that consoling, happy dream which had been interrupted by the consciousness of reality. But to my astonishment, I found that so soon as I would re-enter the former dreams, this continuation became impossible, and, what astonished me yet more, gave me no longer any satisfaction.

CHAPTER XVI.

"GRIND AND YOU'LL HAVE FLOUR."

I PASSED the night in the storeroom, and nothing further happened; only the following morning, a Sunday, I was led to a small room adjoining the class-room, and again shut up. I began to hope that my punishment would be limited to confinement, and my thoughts, under the influence of a sound soft sleep, a clear sun playing upon the ice-crystals on the windows, and the usual noise in the street, began to calm themselves.

However, with all that, solitude became intolerable; I should have liked to move, to talk to somebody of what weighed upon my heart—but no living creature was near me. This position was the more unpleasant, because, whether I liked it or no, I could not avoid hearing how St. Jerome walked through his room and quietly whistled some commonplace tune.

I was fully convinced that, in fact, he had no particular desire to whistle, but did it merely for the purpose of annoying me. At two o'clock St. Jerome and Woloda went downstairs, and Nicola brought my dinner. When I spoke to him on what I had done and what awaited me, he said—

"Psha, sir! don't be alarmed; "*grind and you'll have flour.*"

Although the expression, which even later has sometimes kept up my firmness of mind, comforted me a little; the very circumstance that I received not merely bread and water, but a whole dinner, and even dessert, gave me much to think upon. If they had not sent the dessert, it would have been a sign that my punishment was to be limited to confinement; but now it was evident that they thought me not yet punished—that I was only kept away from the others as an evil-doer, and that the punishment was yet to come. While still engaged in solving this question, the key of my prison turned, and St. Jerome, with a severe and official expression, entered.

"Come to your grandmama," said he, without looking at me.

I should have liked first to brush my coat, now covered with dust, but St. Jerome said that this was quite unnecessary, as I was in such a miserable moral condition, that my exterior was not worth considering. Katenka, Lubotshka, and Woloda looked at me when St. Jerome led me through the saloon, with just the same expression as that with which we used to look at the convicts who passed our house on certain days. When I went to grandmama's arm-chair with the intention of kissing her hand, she withdrew it and put it under her mantilla.

"Well, my dear," began she, after a long pause, during which she looked at me from head to foot with such an expression that I knew not where to look nor

what to do, "I must confess you value my love for you dearly, and afford me a great consolation. M. St. Jerome, who, at my request," continued she, putting a stress on each word, "undertook your education, can no longer remain in my house. Why? Just for you, my dear! I hoped," said she, after a pause, and with a tone which clearly shewed her speech was prepared beforehand, "that you would be grateful for his care and the trouble he has taken with you—that you would appreciate his services; but, you baby! you silly boy! you dare to raise your hand against him! Very well, very good! I begin also to think that you are not able to understand noble treatment, but that you need other humiliating means. Ask pardon directly!" added she, with a stern and commanding tone, and pointing at St. Jerome. "Do you hear me?"

I followed the direction of grandmama's finger, but seeing St. Jerome's coat I turned my head away, stirred not from the spot, and felt again the strong beating of the heart.

"What! have you not heard what I told you?"

I trembled all over my body, but did not stir.

"Coko," said grandmama, probably remarking my inward sufferings; "Coko," repeated she, with a voice more tender than harsh, "is this you?"

"Grandmama! I cannot ask his pardon for"—said I, stopping suddenly, because I felt that I should not be able to pronounce another word for the tears which choked me.

"I ordered you—I begged you. What is the matter with you?"

"I–I–I–will–not–can–not," uttered I, and the tears, long kept back and accumulated on my breast, at once burst forth like a stream which breaks the dike and desperately overflows its banks.

"*C'est ainsi que vous obéissez à votre seconde mère, c'est ainsi que vous reconnaissez ses bontés,*" said St. Jerome, with a tranquil tone, "*à genoux!*"

"Oh God! if *she* were to see this!" exclaimed grandmama, turning from me and wiping off her tears, "if *she* were to see it—it's all for the best—she would never have survived such a grief—never!"

And grandmama wept more and more—so did I likewise, but I did not think of asking pardon.

"*Tranquillisez vous au nom du ciel, Madame la Comtesse,*" said St. Jerome.

But grandmama heard him no longer; she covered her face with her hands, and her sobs soon changed into hiccough and hysterics. Mimi and Gasha rushed into the room with frightened faces; salts and spirits were applied, and soon the whole house was in confusion.

"Rejoice at your work!" said St. Jerome, leading me out of the room.

"Good God! what have I done? what a terrible criminal I am!"

So soon as St. Jerome, having told me to go into his room, returned below, I, quite unconscious of what I did, ran down the grand staircase which led into the street. Whether I intended merely to run away from home, or to drown myself, I do not recollect; I only know that, covering my face with my hands so as to see nothing, I went on.

"Where are you going?" asked a well-known voice. "I just want you, my dear."

I would have passed by, but papa took hold of me, and said in a severe tone:

"Come with me, you impudent fellow! how could you dare to touch the portfolio in my cabinet?" continued he, while dragging me into a room. "Oh! you are silent? Eh!" added he, pulling my ear.

"I am guilty," said I; "I don't myself know what came to me."

"Ah, you don't know what came to you? You don't know—you don't know?" repeated he, more and more violently pulling my ear; "will you again thrust your nose where you ought not?—will you—will you?"

Although my ear ached dreadfully I did not cry, but I felt a morally agreeable sensation. As soon as papa let go my ear, I took hold of his hand and covered it with tears and kisses.

"Beat me!" said I, crying; "more pain—harder—I am a wicked, vile, miserable creature!"

"What is the matter with you?" said he, slightly pushing me back.

"No, I will not go away!" exclaimed I, seizing his coat; "every one hates me, I know it; but for God's sake *you* hear me, protect me, or send me out of the house! I cannot live with *him; he* tries to humiliate me—he orders me to kneel down before him—he would strike me. I cannot stand this, I am no baby; I cannot suffer it, I shall die—I shall kill myself! *He* told grandmama that I was naughty; she is ill now—

she will die through me—I through him—for God's—sake—let me—why—tor-ment—me?"

Tears choked me; I sat down on the couch, and, incapable of speaking, fell with my head on his knees and sobbed so that I felt as if I must die of grief.

"Why are you such a water-pump?" said papa, with compassion, stooping over me.

"*He* is my tyrant—my murderer—I shall die—nobody loves me!" stammered I, scarcely audible, and fell into convulsions.

Papa took me up and carried me into the bedroom. I fell asleep.

When I awoke it was late; one candle only burned in the room, and our medical man, Mimi, and Lubotshka sat near my bed. On their faces I read anxiety for my health. I felt so well and easy after a twelve-hours' sleep, that I could have stood up directly, if it had not been convenient for me to let them believe a little longer that I was ill.

CHAPTER XVII.

HATRED.

YES, this was the real feeling of hatred, not the hatred of which you read in novels, and in the existence of which I do not believe—the hatred which could find a satisfaction in doing harm to another—but that hatred which consists in an unconquerable aversion for a person, who for all that is deserving of your esteem, and makes his very hair, neck, gait, voice, all his members, his movements, disgusting to you; whilst, in spite of all this, an incomprehensible power attracts you towards him, and compels you to follow his slightest movements with anxious attention.

This feeling I experienced for St. Jerome, who had now lived with us for a year and a-half.

Judging coolly of this man, I find that he was a true Frenchman, but a Frenchman in the best acceptation of the word. He was pretty well instructed, and fulfilled conscientiously his duty with regard to us; but he had the peculiar features of fickle egotism, boastfulness, impertinence, and ignorant self-confidence, common to all his countrymen, and entirely opposite to the Russian character.

All this displeased me. Grandmama had of course declared to him her aversion for corporeal punishment,

and he consequently dared not beat us, but nevertheless he often threatened us, and particularly me, with the rod, and repeated the word *fouètter* somewhat like *fouâtter* in a detestable and expressive way, as though to beat me would afford him the greatest satisfaction.

I was not in the least afraid of the bodily pain, having never experienced it, but the mere idea that St. Jerome could beat me put me into a frightful condition of wrath and despair.

It had occurred sometimes that Karl Iwanitsh, in moments of anger, had made use of the ruler or his braces; but I recollect this without the least anger.

Even at the time of which I am now speaking (when I was fourteen years old), if Karl Iwanitsh had struck me, I should tranquilly have submitted to his beating. I loved him, remembered him as long as I did myself, and looked upon him as a member of our family; but St. Jerome was a haughty, self-loving man, for whom I felt nothing except the involuntary respect which I entertained for all older persons. Karl Iwanitsh was a comical old '*uncle*' whom I loved with all my heart, but who was withal placed below me in my childish comprehension of social distinctions. St. Jerome, on the contrary, was a well-educated handsome young dandy, who endeavoured to show himself equal to any one.

Karl Iwanitsh scolded and punished us always coolly, and it was visible that he thought it a necessary but disagreeable duty. St. Jerome, on the contrary, liked to show himself in his part of a judge when he punished us; it was evident that he did it quite as much for his

own satisfaction as for our good. He was pleased with his authority. His high sounding French phrases, which he pronounced with a strong stress on the last syllables, were to me inexpressibly disgusting. Karl Iwanitsh when angry used to say, "What a foolish puppet-comedy this!" or, "There's a boy like a Spaniard fly!" (he meant to say Spanish fly!) and so on.

St. Jerome called us "*mauvais sujet, villain, garnement,*" and so on; epithets with which he offended my self-esteem deeply. Karl Iwanitsh ordered us to remain on our knees with our faces turned to the wall, and the punishment consisted in the bodily pain of such a position; the other one assumed a haughty demeanour, made a grand gesture with his hand, and exclaimed in a tragical tone, "*à genoux, mauvais sujet!*" he ordered us to kneel down with face turned towards him and to ask pardon. His punishment consisted in humiliation.

I was not punished, and nobody even further mentioned what had happened with me; but I could not forget what I had experienced—the shame, fear, and hatred of these two days. Although St. Jerome from that time, as it seemed, gave up all hopes of me and hardly occupied himself with me, I could not accustom myself to look indifferently at him. Every time our eyes met, I felt as though my look expressed too openly my dislike, and I tried to assume an expression of indifference—but then it seemed that he must guess my hypocrisy, and I blushed and turned altogether away.

In short it seemed extremely hard for me to have any intercourse whatever with him.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MAIDSERVANT'S ROOM.

I FELT more and more lonely, and my principal satisfaction consisted in solitary contemplation and observation. I shall speak in the next chapter of the objects of my contemplations. The scene of my observations was by preference the maidservant's room, in which was being enacted a novel—touching and engrossing me to the utmost degree. The heroine of this romance was, of course, Masha. She was in love with Basil, who had known her before she was servant in the house, and then promised to marry her. Fate having separated them five years ago, reunited them in grandmama's house, but put an obstacle between them in the person of Nicola (Masha's uncle), who would not hear of his niece marrying Basil, whom he called an '*uneducated*' and '*uncontrollable*' man. This obstacle was the reason why the otherwise rather cool and negligent Basil fell as passionately in love, as is possible for a man who is a servant and a tailor, wears a red shirt, and has pomaded hair. Although the expressions of this love were always strange and unusual—(for instance, meeting Masha, he constantly endeavoured to cause her some pain, either by pinching her, or slapping her with his open hand, or squeezing her with such force that she

could hardly breathe)—the love itself was sincere, which he proved even by this, that from the moment when Nicola refused him the hand of his niece, he took to *drinking*, merely from grief, went to the public-houses, became in short such a boisterous fellow, that more than once he was sent for a humiliating punishment to the police-office.

But these faults and their consequences only raised him in the eyes of Masha, and heightened yet more her love for him. When Basil was detained by the police, she cried the whole day, complained of her hard fate to Gasha (who took a lively part in the affairs of the unhappy lovers), and, despising the anger and the blows of her uncle, she ran secretly to the police to visit and console her friend.

Excuse me, reader, that I introduce you to such company. If the cords of love and compassion have not vanished from your soul, even in the maidservant's room you will find sounds which will make them vibrate.

Whether or no it please you to follow me, I return to the resting-place on the staircase, whence I could overlook what passed in the room. There was the *stove-couch** upon which stood an iron, an old cap-block with a crooked nose, a wash-tub and a basin; there was the window before which lay piled up in disorder a piece of black wax, rags of silk, the remainder of a half-eaten cucumber, a box with sweets, etc.; there was the large table at which *she* sat, in the pink cotton dress which I liked so much, and a blue handkerchief which particularly attracted my attention. She was sewing, in-

* Belonging to the large Russian stoves.

terrupting her work but rarely to scratch her head a little, or bite the end of her thread, or snuff the candle; and I looked at her and thought, Why was she not born a lady—with her blue eyes, her magnificent fair hair, and beautiful bust?

How splendid would she look sitting in a drawing-room, in a cap with pink ribbands and a silk gown; not such a one as Mimi wears, but such as I saw on the Twer boulevard.

She would be working at a frame, and I should look at her in the looking-glass; and whatever she liked I would do; I would help her on with her mantle, and even hand her food. And this drunkard face and disgusting figure of Basil! in the scanty coat from beneath which the dirty red shirt is visible, in each of his gestures, in each movement of his back, I fancy I see the unmistakeable signs of the humiliating punishment he has undergone.

"Ah, Basil! *again?*" said Masha, sticking her needle in the pincushion and not lifting her head to look at him who now entered.

"Well, can any good come from *him?*" said Basil.

"If he would at least say something decisive; but thus I lose myself, I am powerless, and all through *him.*"

"Will you have some tea?" asked Madesha, another servant.

"No, thank you, much obliged. And why does he hate me—this old thief, this uncle of yours? Why? For the dress I wear now, for my stature, for my gait? In one word, —— him! Bother him!" concluded Basil, snapping his fingers.

"We must be patient," said Masha, threading her needle; "but you are so—"

"My nerves do not stand it, that's all!"

At this moment the door of grandmama's room was heard banging, and the angry voice of Gasha mounting the stairs.

"There! try to please when people do not themselves know what they like—cursed life! hard labour! nothing else! If one thing could but happen—God forgive me my sin!" murmured she, with a corresponding gesture of her hands.

"I wish you good evening, Agafa Michailowna!" said Basil, rising to meet her.

"*You* here? it is not much to your honour!" answered she rudely, looking at him. "And why do you come here? Is the maid's room the place for men to come to?"

"I wished to inquire after your health," said Basil, softly.

"I shall soon breathe my last, that's my health!" cried Gasha, still in the greatest anger.

Basil laughed.

"There's nothing to laugh at when I say I shall soon die—so it will be! Look at the drunkard! marry he would—the fool—march out from here!"

And Gasha, stamping on the floor, went into her room, slamming the door in such a way that the window shook. For a long while yet she was to be heard scolding at and with everything, throwing about dresses and different objects, and pulling the ears of her favourite cat: at last the door opened, and puss, mewing pitifully, was flung out by the tail.

"It is wiser to come another time to take tea," said Basil, in a whisper, "at a better meeting."

"No, no," replied Madesha, "I'll go directly to fetch the urn."

"Yes, I will put an end to it," continued Basil, sitting down close to Masha, as soon as Madesha had left the room; "I had better go straight to the countess and say, so-and-so, or else I throw up everything and run away into the wide world. Oh dear,—oh dear!"

"And shall I remain here?"

"Yes, as to you—that's the thing—that's what I *do* feel. You have—been my sweetheart—so long ago —oh dear! oh dear!"

"Why, Basil, why don't you bring me your shirts to wash? Now, look how dirty this is," said Masha, after a pause, during which she had investigated his ruffles.

At this moment grandmama's bell was heard ringing, and Gasha came out of her room.

"Well, what do you want with her, you impudent fellow!" said she, pushing Basil (who had risen at her entrance) towards the door; "first you bring a girl so far, then you stick to her—it is perhaps an amusement for you to see her tears. There's the door! Be off! we want your room. And what good do you find in him?" continued she, addressing Masha. "Has not your uncle given it you to-day? No, but she must stick to her will; '*None will I have but Basil!*' fool that you are!"

"Yes, and I will have none but he—never will I love another—rather kill myself for him!" Masha uttered suddenly with tears gushing forth.

I looked at Masha for a long while, how she wiped off her tears with her handkerchief—then at Basil, trying to find out the point of view from which he might appear so attractive to her. But, although I sympathised sincerely with her grief, I could by no means understand how such a charming creature, as Masha appeared to me to be, could love Basil.

"When I am a man," thought I, returning to my room, "Petroffska will be mine, and Basil and Masha my serfs. Then I shall sit in my cabinet and smoke a pipe, and Masha will accidentally pass by on her way to the kitchen with an iron. I say, 'Masha, come here!' She comes, and nobody is in the room. Suddenly Basil enters, and seeing her, says, 'My sweetheart is lost!' and Masha also cries; then I say, 'Basil! I know that you love her and that she loves you; here are one thousand roubles for you—marry her, and may God grant you happiness!' and I leave them."

Among the innumerable thoughts and dreams which pass, without any regularity or logic, through the mind and the imagination, there are some which leave behind them a deep sensation, so that often, without remembering the exact subject of a thought, we yet recollect there was something good in our head,—we retain the effect and try to reproduce it. Such a deep trace was left in my soul by the idea of sacrificing my feelings to Masha's happiness, which she thought of finding only in a union with Basil.

CHAPTER XIX.

YOUTH.

PEOPLE will hardly believe me when I tell them what were the dearest and continual objects of my contemplation during my youth, so little did they agree with my age and position. But, according to my opinion, the contrast between the position of man and his moral activity is the most reliable sign of truth.

During the time in which I led a solitary and concentrated moral life, I was already occupied with abstract thoughts about the destination of man, about a future life, and the immortality of the soul; and my young intellect tried, with all the warmth of inexperience, to solve these questions which form the highest level of thought that human understanding can attempt, although it is not capable of achieving a final decision.

It seems to me that intellect takes in each single individual the same course of development as in the human race at large; that the thoughts which serve as a basis to the different philosophical theories are an inseparable part of intellect itself; and that every man, more or less clearly, is conscious of them before he knows anything of the existence of philosophical theories. These thoughts presented themselves to my

mind with such clearness and so strikingly, that I tried even to apply them to life, imagining that I was the *first* who had discovered such grand and useful truths.

Sometimes the idea came to me that happiness does not depend upon exterior causes, but upon our relation with them; that man, accustoming himself to bear sufferings, cannot be unhappy; and to realize the latter, I held, in spite of the horrible pain, for five minutes, in my outstretched hands, the heavy dictionary of Tatitsheff, or I went to the storeroom and beat my bare back with ropes in such a way that the tears involuntarily rushed into my eyes.

Another time, remembering suddenly that death might find me at any hour, any minute, I decided that man could not be happy otherwise than in profiting by the present, and not thinking of the future, and wondered how people had not found this out. Now I, acting under the influence of this thought, threw my lessons aside for two or three days, and reposing on my bed, comforted myself with novel-reading and eating gingerbread with honey, which I had bought with my last money.

Once, standing before a black-board and drawing different figures upon it with honey, I was struck by the thought, Why is symmetry agreeable to the eye? What is symmetry? "That is an innate feeling," answered I to myself; "but what is its basis? Perhaps everything in life is symmetry? No, on the contrary; *this* is life, (and I drew an oblong figure on the board) —after life the soul goes to eternity—(and I drew a line from one end of the oblong figure to the edge

of the board). Why should there be no such line on the corresponding side? Oh, certainly, if there be an eternity on one side, there is a corresponding one upon the other—we have existed before this life, although we have lost the recollection of it."

This conclusion, which seemed at that time extremely new and clear to me, the arguments for which, however, at present it would be difficult for me to link together, pleased me extremely, and taking a piece of paper, I tried to write it down; but at this attempt such a rush of thoughts stormed through my brain that I was obliged to spring up and pace up and down the room. When I came to the window my attention was arrested by a water-cart horse, which the coachman was harnessing at the moment, and all my thoughts concentrated themselves upon the decision of the question, "Into what animal or man will the soul of this horse pass when it dies?" At the same moment Woloda went through the room and smiled, seeing me absorbed in speculative thoughts; and this smile sufficed to convince me that all whereof I had been cogitating was terrible nonsense.

I have told this, just recollecting it, merely to shew the reader what was the manner of my reasonings. But none of the philosophical theories attracted me so much as that of scepticism, which at one time led me to a state of mind bordering upon insanity. I fancied that beyond myself nobody and nothing in the whole world really existed; that the objects were no objects, and that images appeared only when I directed my attention to them, and vanished directly so soon

as I left off thinking of them. In short, I arrived at Schelling's theory by the conviction that there were no real objects, but only my conception of them. There were moments when, under the influence of this constant idea, I went to such extremes of madness, that for instance, once I turned myself sharply round, hoping that by the suddenness of the movement I might meet with the *void* which existed there, where I was not!

What a pitiable spring of moral activity is human intellect!

My weak reason could not define the impenetrable, and broke to pieces in fruitless labour one conviction after another, which, happily for my future life, I never wanted courage to destroy if they proved insufficient. From all this heavy mental struggle I brought nothing home but pliancy of the mind, a weakening of the strength of will, a habit of continual moral analysis, diminishing the freshness of feeling and the clearness of judgment. Abstract thinking forms subsequently the capacity of man to catch with consciousness the disposition of the mind at certain moments, and to transmit it to memory. My inclination to abstract thinking developed consciousness in me to such a degree, that often when I began to think about the simplest object I lost myself in a labyrinth of analysis of my own thoughts; I thought no longer of the question occupying me, but I thought of that which I thought. Asking myself, "Of what do I think?" the reply was, "I think of that of which I think." "And now of what do I think?" "I think, that I try to think of what I think," and so on. Reason vanished before too much

reason. Each philosophical discovery which I made flattered my self-love exceedingly: I often imagined myself to be a great man discovering new truths for the benefit of mankind, and with a proud feeling of my dignity I looked down upon other mortals; but, strange to say, coming in contact with these mortals, I was stupidly timid with each of them, and the higher I stood in my own opinion, the less was I capable not only of shewing in the presence of others the consciousness of my own dignity, but I could not divest myself of the sense of being ashamed of my most simple words and movements.

CHAPTER XX.

WOLODA.

YES, the farther I advance in the description of this period of my life, the more difficult and heavy is the task to me. I find too rarely among the reminiscences of this time, moments full of that warm, sincere feeling which constantly and joyfully lighted up my childhood. Involuntarily I would like to pass quickly over the solitude of youth, to arrive at that happy time when again a sincerely, tender noble feeling of friendship marked with a blissful light the end of this epoch, and the beginning of a new phase of my youth, filled with charm and poetry.

I shall not follow out my recollections from hour to hour, but only cast a quick glance at the most prominent of them, from that time up to which I have carried on my tale, to the moment of my approximation to that extraordinary man who had a decisive influence upon my character and ideas.

Woloda was about to enter the university: the teachers came to him now independently of me; and I heard with envy and involuntary respect, how he, boldly tracing on the black-board with white chalk, talked about *function*, *cynus*, and so on, which seemed to me expressions of unattainable wisdom. Once, on

a Sunday, before dinner, all the teachers, among them two professors, assembled in grandmama's room; and, in the presence of papa and some friends, went over with Woloda the repetition of the university examination, at which he, to grandmama's delight, shewed no common amount of knowledge.

Questions upon different subjects were also addressed to me; but on all of them I was an absolute blank, and the professors visibly endeavoured to conceal my ignorance from grandmama, which confused me yet more. But, after all, I was only fifteen years of age, and consequently had still a year before me to prepare for examination. Woloda came downstairs only for dinner, and for whole days and evenings continued his studies up in his own room, not from necessity, but because he himself desired it. He was exceedingly ambitious, and would pass through the examination, not by halves, but splendidly.

The first day had arrived. Woloda had a new blue dress-coat with brass buttons, a gold watch, and polished boots; at the gate stood papa's phaeton—Nicola opened it, and Woloda and St. Jerome drove to the university. The girls, particularly Katenka, looked from the window, their faces beaming with delight, at the charming figure of Woloda sitting in the carriage. Papa repeated, "God be with him!" and grandmama, having also dragged herself to the window, made the sign of the cross as long as the phaeton was visible, and murmured something.

Woloda came home. All impatiently thronged upon him. 'How much? Good? Yes!' But his happy

face was answer enough. He had received five marks of approbation.* The following day he was dismissed with the same good wishes for his success and the same anxiety, and received with the same impatience and joy.

This lasted for nine days. The tenth was to be the last, but the most difficult of all, namely, about 'the laws of God.'

We all stood at the window, and with yet greater impatience waited for him.

Already two o'clock, and no Woloda.

"Heavens! here they are, papa, here they are!" screamed Lubotshka, looking out from the window.

And, in fact, the phaeton arrived with St. Jerome and Woloda, the latter no longer in the grey cap and blue dress-coat, but in the uniform of a student of the university, with an embroidered blue collar, three-cornered hat, and the gilded sword at his side.

"Ah, if *she* were alive now!" exclaimed grandmama, seeing Woloda in the uniform, and then swooning.

Woloda, with a beaming face, then enters the anteroom, and embraces me, Lubotshka, Mimi, and Katenka, who blushes to her very ears. Woloda does not know himself for joy. And how smart he looks in this uniform! How well his blue collar suits his just budding black moustaches! What a tall, elegant figure he has, and what a noble gait!

On this memorable day we all dined in grandmama's room; every face expressed delight, and after dinner,

* *Five* is the highest testimonial.

with the dessert, the servants, with solemn but pleased faces, brought in the bottles of champagne.

Grandmama, for the first time since mama's death, drank a full glass of champagne to Woloda's health, and, looking at him, again wept for joy.

From this time Woloda went alone in his own carriage, invited his own friends for himself, smoked, went to balls; and I even saw once how he drank two bottles of champagne with the guests in his room, and how they, with each glass, had a toast to some mysterious being, and quarrelled to whom should belong the bottom of the bottle.

He dined, however, regularly at home, and after dinner stretched himself out on the divan and talked secretly with Katenka; but from what I could overhear, whilst feigning not to pay attention, they talked merely of the heroes and heroines of the novels they had read, of jealousy, of love,—and I could never understand what they found attractive in these conversations, and why they smiled so happily and discussed so warmly.

Altogether I observed, that between Woloda and Katenka there existed, besides the friendship natural to companions of childhood, a strange relation, separating them from us and uniting them mysteriously to one another.

CHAPTER XXI.

KATENKA AND LUBOTSHKA.

KATENKA was now sixteen years old; she was a grown-up girl. Angular forms, bashfulness, and awkwardness of movement, peculiar to girls at the passage from childhood to youth, then usually take the place of the harmonious freshness, the graceful, only half-developed bloom of childhood—but she did not change. Hers were always the same blue eyes with their joyous glance, the same well-shaped nose, almost in a straight line with the forehead, and with firm nostrils—the little mouth with its charming smile and the dimples on the rosy cheeks, the same white little hands; and to her pre-eminently was the epithet of a *pure girl* applicable. There was nothing new about her except the arrangement of her thick fair hair, which she now wore like a 'lady;' and the young bosom, an addition which gave her great joy, and at the same time bashfulness.

Although she and Lubotshka had grown up together and received the same education, they were nevertheless totally different in every respect.

Lubotshka was not tall, and in consequence of the rickets which she had had, her legs were like those of a goose, and her stature very ugly. In her whole face

there was nothing pretty save the eyes, but they were indeed wonderful, large, black, and with such an infinitely agreeable expression of gravity and *naiveté*, that she could not but attract attention. She was in everything simple and natural. Katenka looked as though she wanted to be like something; Lubotshka looked always straight at people, and sometimes fixing her splendid black eyes on some one, she kept them there so long that she got blamed for it, and was told that it was improper. Katenka, on the contrary, cast her eyelids down, blinked, and pretended that she was shortsighted, although I knew very well that she had excellent sight. Lubotshka did not like to exhibit before strangers; and when any one of the visitors began to kiss her, she was angry and said she did not like *tenderness*. Katenka, on the contrary, in the presence of strangers was always particularly tender with Mimi, and liked to go through the room arm in arm with some other girl. Lubotshka was a terrible laugher, and sometimes ran about the room laughing and fighting with her hands. Katenka used to cover her mouth with her pocket-handkerchief, or her hands, when she began to laugh. Lubotshka was always exceedingly pleased when grown-up young men conversed with her, and said that she would like to marry a hussar; Katenka pretended that all men were nasty, that she would never marry; and she was quite another person when a gentleman spoke to her, as though she were afraid of something. Lubotshka was always angry with Mimi because she wanted her to have her stays so tight, that it was impossible for her to breathe, and eat and drink in comfort; Katenka, on

the contrary, often put her finger in her waistband shew how loose it was, and ate very little. Lubotshl liked to draw heads, Katenka only flowers and butt flies; the first played very well the concerts of Fi and the sonatas of Beethoven; the second only variatic and waltzes, retarded the time, used the pedals c tinually, and always before she began to play anythi took three chords *arpeggio*. But Katenka, according my opinion at that time, was much more like the gr persons, and therefore pleased me infinitely better.

CHAPTER XXII.

PAPA.

PAPA had been particularly pleased from the time that Woloda entered the university, and came much more frequently to dine with grandmama. However, I knew likewise from Nicola that he had won a great deal of late. He even came to sit with us in the evening before he went to the club; he used to sit down at the piano, and telling us to stand around, and beating time with his thin boots, (he never wore heels, and did not like them,) made us sing gypsy songs. Then one ought to see the droll enthusiasm of his beloved Lubotshka, who, in her turn, adored him.

Sometimes, also, he came to the class-room, and, with a severe face, listened how I said my lessons; but by the few words with which he corrected me, I saw that he knew still less about it than myself. Sometimes he winked and made us secret signs, when grandmama began to scold and to find fault with everybody. "Now, that's for us, children!" said he. But, upon the whole, the unattainable height upon which my childish imagination had placed him was somewhat lowered.

I still kissed his large white hand with a feeling of love and respect, but I allowed myself to think about him, to criticise his behaviour, and involuntarily thoughts

came to me, the presence of which frightened me. Never shall I forget one occurrence which awakened many such thoughts and caused me great suffering. Once, late in the evening, he entered the drawing-room, in his black dress-coat and white waistcoat, to take Woloda, who was still dressing in his room, to a ball. Grandmama was in her bedroom, and had ordered that Woloda was to come and say good-bye to her (she always would have him come to her before going to a ball), that she might look at him, bless him, and direct him as to his behaviour. The room was lighted by one lamp only; Mimi and Katenka were walking up and down; Lubotshka sat at the piano, and played the second concert of Field, mama's favourite piece. Never saw I such a family likeness as between mama and my sister. The likeness was not so much in the face or in the stature, but it was striking in the hands, the gait, the voice, and even the favourite expressions, and, more than in anything else, in her way of playing on the piano and her whole behaviour at it. She arranged her dress in the same way when sitting down, turned the leaves exactly like her, tapped angrily with her fingers when a difficult passage would not succeed, then said, "Oh dear me!" and above all, played with the same delicacy and exquisite purity of touch which caused the execution of Field to be so characteristically called '*jeu perlé*,' and to which nothing of the humbug of our modern vertuosi can be compared.

Papa came into the room with soft, short steps, and approached Lubotshka, who, seeing him, ceased playing.

"No, play, Luba, play!" said he, forcing her to sit

down. Lubotshka continued to play, and papa, leaning his head on his hand, sat a long while opposite to her; suddenly shrugging his shoulders, he rose, and began to pace the room. Coming to the piano, he stopped every time a moment and looked fixedly at Lubotshka. I saw by his movements and his gait that he was in great agitation. Once he stopped behind Lubotshka, kissed her black hair, and then, quickly turning round, resumed his walk. Having finished, Lubotshka went to him and asked, "Was it well played?" He silently took her head in both his hands, and kissed her forehead and her eyes with such tenderness as I had never before seen in him.

"Good God—you cry!" said Lubotshka, suddenly, leaving off playing with his watch-chain and looking up to him with her large black eyes. "Pardon me, my darling papa, I quite forgot that this was dear *mama's piece!*"

"No, love, play it often," said he, with a voice trembling from emotion. "If you could but know the good it does me to cry with you!"

He kissed her once more, and, trying to master his agitation and shrugging his shoulders, he went to the door which led to the corridor and opposite to Woloda's room.

"Waldemar, shall you soon be ready?" cried he, stopping in the middle of the corridor.

At the same moment Masha came along. "You become daily prettier!" said he.

Masha blushed and passed on.

"Waldemar, shall you soon be ready?" repeated

papa, shaking himself and coughing a little when Masha slipped away and he saw me.

I loved papa; but the intellect lives independently of the heart, and often gives birth to thoughts which are offensive to the feelings and incomprehensible and harsh to them. And such thoughts, however much I struggled to avoid them, sprang up in my mind.

CHAPTER XXIII.

GRANDMAMA.

GRANDMAMA became weaker every day. Her bell, Gasha's grumbling voice, and the slamming of doors in her room, were often heard, and she received us no longer in her boudoir in the Voltairian arm-chair, but in her bedroom, lying in bed, supported by cushions trimmed with lace. When she welcomed us, I observed on her hand a whitish-yellow swelling, and I smelled the same heavy scent which, five years ago, I had found in mama's room. The doctor came three times a-day, and there had already been several consultations. But the character of her haughty and ceremonious behaviour towards all who lived with her, particularly towards papa, did not change in the least. She continued in the same way to accentuate certain words, to raise her eyebrows and to say, '*my dear!*'

Then, for some days we did not see her at all, and one morning St. Jerome proposed to me to take a drive in the sledge, with Lubotshka and Katenka, during the hours of study. Although I saw that the street was covered with straw beneath the windows of grandmama's room, and that people in blue stockings* stood at our gate, I could not understand why we were sent

* Officials who attend to the funeral business.—*Translator.*

out at this unusual hour. During the whole time of the drive, Lubotshka and I were in that peculiarly merry disposition, when the least trifle, every word, every movement, makes you laugh.

A pedlar carrying a tray trotted across the road, and we laughed. Some miserable cabmen, driving at full speed and shaking the reins, overtook our sledge, and we laughed. Philip's whip entangled itself in the slide of the sledge, and he, disentangling it, said, 'bother it!' and we were dying with laughter. Mimi, with an expression of displeasure, said that only fools laughed without reason; and Lubotshka, red from the effort to suppress her merriment, gave me an under-glance, our eyes met, and we burst out with so Homeric a laughter, that the tears rushed to our eyes, and we could not put a stop to it, although it almost choked us. Hardly had we ceased a little, when I looked at Lubotshka and pronounced one of the slang words which were then the fashion among ourselves, and which always called forth hilarity, and we laughed again.

Coming home, I was just opening my mouth to make a nice grimace to Lubotshka, when my eye was struck by the black cover of a coffin leaning against the gate, and my mouth remained fixed in the open position.

"Your grandmama is dead!" said St. Jerome, with a pale face, coming to meet us.

During the whole time while the corpse of grandmama was still in the house, I experienced a heavy sense of the fear of death; the dead body reminded me very forcibly, and disagreeably, that I too should have

to die, a feeling which people accustom themselves to mistake for grief. I did not regret grandmama, and hardly anybody regretted her sincerely. Although the house was full of condoling visitors, nobody really mourned for her, except one person, whose sincere grief struck me very much, for this person was—Gasha. She went to the garret, shut herself up there, did not cease crying and accusing herself, tore her hair, and would not hear of consolation; saying, that her own death would be the only relief for her after that of the beloved mistress.

Again I assert that, in matters of feeling, the unexpected effects are the most reliable signs of truth.

Grandmama was no longer there, but in our house recollections and different talks about her were still alive. These talks particularly referred to her last will, which she made shortly before her death, and which, as yet, nobody knew but her bosom-friend prince Iwan Iwanitsh. Among grandmama's servants I remarked some agitation, and heard innumerable conjectures as to whom anything would be left, and the probable amount of it. I confess that involuntarily I rejoiced at the idea of our being the heirs.

After the sixth week, Nicolai, who was the regular newspaper in our house, told me that grandmama had left her whole fortune to Lubotshka, trusting it until her majority, not to papa, but to the prince Iwan Iwanitsh.

CHAPTER XXIV.

I.

THERE remained only a few months before the time of my entering the university. I made good progress, had no fear, and felt even satisfaction in the classes. I was in the best disposition, and knew my lessons clearly and fluently. I prepared for the faculty of mathematics. But, to say the truth, I chose this latter only because the words, *tangent*, *differentials*, *integrals*, *etc.* pleased me extremely.

I was not so tall as Woloda, although stout and broad-shouldered, as ugly as ever, and as much tormented by it as before. I tried to appear original. One thing comforted me; papa had said that I had an *intelligent countenance*—and I firmly believed it.

St. Jerome was satisfied with me, even praised me, and I not only ceased to hate him, but when he one day said that, with *my capacities* and with *my intellect*, it would be shameful not to do this and that—I think I almost loved him.

My observations on the maidservant's room had long ago been discontinued. I was ashamed to hide myself behind the door, and besides, I confess the conviction of Masha's love for Basil greatly cooled my own. I was cured finally of this unfortunate passion

by Basil's marriage, for which, upon his request, I myself asked papa's permission.

When the newly-married couple, with sweetmeats and cakes upon a tray-board, came to papa to thank him, and Masha, in a cap with blue ribbands, kissed each of us on the shoulder, to thank us also, I felt only the effect of the pomade of roses in her hair, but no other sensation.

Generally I began to recover from the defects of my youth, except however the principal one, with which I shall still often have to deal in my life, namely, the inclination to abstract reasoning.

CHAPTER XXV.

WOLODA'S FRIENDS.

ALTHOUGH I played a part, offensive to my self-love, in the society of Woloda's friends, still I liked to sit in his room when he had guests, and to observe silently all that they did. Those who came more frequently than others were the adjutant Dubkoff, and the student prince Nechludoff. Dubkoff was a little, nervous, dark-haired man, no longer in his first youth, very short legged, but not unpleasing, and always gay. He had one of those limited natures which are particularly agreeable for their very limitedness, which are not capable of looking at objects from different sides, and are attracted by everything. The reasonings of such people are commonly one-sided and false, but always pure and attractive. Even this narrow egotism seems therefore excusable and amiable. Besides, for Woloda and me, Dubkoff had a twofold charm; firstly, his military exterior, and principally his age, with which young people had the habit of associating that idea of gentlemanliness (*comme-il-faut*) which was highly esteemed at the time. However, Dubkoff was in reality what is called *un homme comme-il-faut.* The only thing which displeased me was that Woloda sometimes seemed before him as though ashamed of

my innocent behaviour, and still more of my youth. Nechludoff was not handsome. His small grey eyes, low projecting forehead, hands and feet long out of all proportion, could not be called fine features. Fine in him were only his uncommonly tall stature, the delicate colour of his face, and the fine teeth. But his face had such an original and energetic character, from the narrow sparkling eyes and the changing expression—now severe, now childlike, indeterminately smiling—that it was impossible not to remark it. He was habitually much embarrassed, and blushed to the ears at the least trifle, but his embarrassment was widely different from mine. The more he blushed, the more his face expressed decision; it was as though he were angry at his own weakness.

Although very friendly with Woloda and Dubkoff, it was evident that chance alone had united them thus. Their inclinations were entirely different; Woloda and Dubkoff seemed to be afraid of anything like serious contemplation or sensitiveness; Nechludoff, on the contrary, was an enthusiast in the highest degree, and often, regardless of their satirical observations, plunged into reasonings about philosophical questions and about feelings. The two former liked to talk about the fair objects of their admiration (they had always several at once, and always both the same); Nechludoff, on the contrary, was seriously annoyed when they teazed him with his love for a certain red-haired lady.

Woloda and Dubkoff allowed themselves to gossip very often about their relatives, and it amused them; Nechludoff became horribly angry when they talked

of the weak points in the character of an aunt of his whom he loved almost adoringly. The two went after supper generally to some place or other without Nechludoff, and called him a "dainty girl."

Prince Nechludoff struck me the first time I saw him, by his exterior as well as by his conversation. But, although I found a great similarity in his disposition to my own—perhaps, indeed, just because I found it so—the impression he produced upon me in the beginning was far from being agreeable. I was not pleased with his quick glance, his firm voice, his proud air, and still less with the complete indifference with which he treated me. Often in the course of conversation I should have liked to contradict him, to triumph over him as punishment for his pride, to shew him that I was clever, although he deigned not to pay me the least attention. My shyness kept me back.

CHAPTER XXVI.

REASONINGS.

WOLODA was lying stretched out upon the sofa, reading a French novel, when I, after my evening classes, went as usual to his room. He looked up for a moment from his book to glance at me, and then went on reading, which perfectly simple and natural movement offended me. I felt as though this glance implied a question why I came, and that he wished to hide his meaning from me. This inclination to attach a significance to the simplest movement, formed a prominent feature of my character at that time. I went to the table and took a book likewise; but before I began to read I thought how ridiculous it was, that not having seen each other for the whole day, we should now not say a word.

"Do you stay at home this evening, Woloda?"

"I don't know—why?"

"So—" said I, and seeing that the conversation was not likely to succeed, I took up my book and read. But how strange, that, when alone, we sometimes passed many hours without saying a word, and that the presence of a third, even mute and wholly indifferent person, sufficed to engage us in the most interesting and varied conversations! We felt that we knew each other too

well. To know one another too well, or too little, decidedly hinders approximation.

"Is Woloda at home?" was heard from the anteroom, in the voice of Dubkoff.

"At home!" cried Woloda, springing up and throwing away his book.

Dubkoff and Nechludoff entered the room.

"Will you come to the theatre, Woloda?"

"No, I have no time," said Woloda, blushing.

"Oh, as for that—come, please!"

"And I have no ticket."

"Tickets, as many as you like, are at the entrance."

"Wait, I shall be back in a moment," said Woloda, evasively, and went out of the room. I knew very well that he would have liked particularly to go, but that he refused because he had no money, and that he now went out of the room to borrow five roubles from one of the servants—to be repaid at his next grant of money.

"How do you do, *diplomatist?*" said Dubkoff, shaking hands with me.

Woloda's friends had called me diplomatist since one day, when grandmama, at dinner, speaking of our future, had said that Woloda must be an officer; and as to me, she would like to see me a diplomatist, in a black dress-coat, my hair arranged *à la coq*, which, in her opinion, were the essential requirements of a diplomatist.

"Where is Woloda gone to?" asked Nechludoff.

"I don't know," said I, blushing at the idea that they probably guessed why he went away.

"I suppose he has no money? True, O diplomatist!"

added he, affirmatively interpreting my smile. "Well, I have none either; and you, Dubkoff?"

"We'll see!" replied Dubkoff, feeling in his pocket and rumaging carefully among some small coin with his short little fingers. "There are five kopeeks—there are twenty—and—that's a-a-a-a-ll!" concluded he, with a comic gesture of the hand.

Woloda re-entered the room.

"Well, do we go?"

"No!"

"How strange you are!" said Nechludoff; "why don't you say that you have no money?—there is my ticket, take it."

"And you?"

"He goes to the box of his cousin," said Dubkoff.

"No, I don't go at all," replied Nechludoff.

"Why?"

"Because I do not like sitting in a box."

"How so?"

"I don't know, I feel uneasy."

"Always the same! I cannot understand how you can feel uneasy when you are with those who all love you so much. This is unnatural, *mon chèr!*"

"What is there to be done *si je suis timide?* I am sure you never blushed in all your life, and I do at every trifle," said he, blushing at the same time.

"Do you know whence proceeds this timidity? *d'un excés d'amour propre, mon chèr,*" said Dubkoff, with a tone of protection.

"What do you mean by *excés d'amour propre?*" asked Nechludoff, deeply offended. "On the contrary,

I am shy because I have too little of *amour propre;* it always seems to me as though I were tiresome, disagreeable—therefore—"

"Get you ready, Woloda," said Dubkoff, tapping Woloda on the shoulder and handing him his paletot. "Ignaz, get your master ready."

"Therefore it often happens with me," continued Nechludoff.

But Dubkoff did not listen. "Tra-la-la-la—lala—lala—lala!" hummed he in a common tune.

"You shall not escape me," observed Nechludoff; "I will prove to you that my shyness is not the result of self-love."

"We'll prove it as we go along to the theatre."

"I have told you I don't go."

"Well, then, stay here and prove it to the diplomatist, and he will tell us all about it when we come back."

"I *will* do so," replied Nechludoff, with childish obstinacy; "make haste to come back."

"Now do you think I am egotistic?" asked he, sitting down with me.

Although I had a settled opinion upon the subject, I was so frightened by this unexpected question that I could not at once reply to him.

"Yes, I think so!" said I, in a trembling voice, and colouring at the idea that the moment was at last come when I should shew him that I was clever; "I think that everybody is egotistic, and that all we do is done from self-love."

"And what do you call self-love?" asked Nechludoff, smiling a little contemptuously, as I thought.

"Self-love is the conviction that we are better and cleverer than all others," said I.

"But how can all have this conviction?" asked he.

"Well, I don't know whether it is right or not—certainly nobody confesses it besides myself; but I am persuaded that I am wiser than any one else in the world, and that you all know this likewise."

"No, I must say that as to myself, I have met with people whom I thought wiser than I," said Nechludoff.

"It cannot be," replied I, with conviction.

"Is it really possible that you think so?" said Nechludoff, looking gravely at me.

"In earnest," answered I.

And an idea crossed my mind, which I expressed directly.

"I will prove this to you;—why do we love ourselves better than others? Because we think ourselves better than others, more worthy of love. If we thought others better than ourselves, we should also love them better; but this is never the case—and even if it were so, I should with all that be right," added I, with an involuntary smile of self-satisfaction.

Nechludoff was silent for some minutes.

"I never thought that you were so clever," said he with a smile so good-humoured and charming, that I felt at once very happy.

Praise exercises an all-powerful influence, not only upon the feelings, but also upon the intellect of people; and under the agreeable sensation, I felt at once much cleverer than before, and thoughts rushed with extraordinary quickness through my head. From self-love

we went over imperceptibly to love, and the theme appeared inexhaustible. Although our reasonings might have been considered nonsensical by listeners —so vague and one-sided were they—for us they had a deep meaning. Our minds had such a perfectly corresponding harmony, that not one chord could be touched in the one, without awakening an echo in the other. We found the greatest satisfaction in this harmonious sound of different chords which we touched in the course of conversation. We felt as though time and words were wanting to express all the thoughts which thronged within us.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE BEGINNING OF FRIENDSHIP.

FROM that time a strange, but exceedingly agreeable relation existed between Dimitrieff Nechludoff and myself. In the presence of other people he paid scarcely any attention to me; but as soon as we were alone, we sat down in some comfortable corner and began reasoning, forgetting everything around us and the time which passed.

We talked about the future life, about art, service, marriage, education; and the idea never occurred to us that everything we said was perhaps the most frightful nonsense. It never occurred, because the nonsense we talked was sensible and good nonsense, and because, while we are young, we still appreciate this good nonsense and believe in it. In youth all the powers of the mind are directed towards the future, and this future assumes such various, vivid, and bewitching forms under the influence of hope—based, not upon the experience of the past, but upon the presumed possibility of happiness—that the different dreams of this future happiness are in themselves the real bliss of this time of life. During the metaphysical reasonings which constituted a chief part of our conversations, I liked those moments when the thoughts arise quicker and

quicker, and, following each other at full speed and growing more and more abstract, at last arrive at such a degree of loftiness, that you feel the impossibility of expressing them, and, attempting it nevertheless, say something widely different from that which you intended. I liked these moments, when, carried on higher and higher into the regions of thinking, we felt suddenly that we could no longer grasp any substance of thought, that we could not go farther.

At the time of the carnival, Nechludoff was so much occupied with different amusements, that, although he came several times a-day to see us, he never spoke a word to me, and I felt so offended, that he seemed to me again a haughty and disagreeable fellow. I awaited an opportunity for shewing him that his company had no longer any value for me, and that I had no particular attachment for him. The first time when, after the carnival, he wanted to speak to me, I said that I had to prepare my lessons and went upstairs; but a quarter of an hour later somebody opened the door of the study, and Nechludoff came in.

"Do I disturb you?" asked he.

"No," said I, although I had intended to say I had a very great deal to do.

"Then why did you go away just now? it is a long while since we have reasoned together, and I am so accustomed to it that I feel something wanting."

My anger had passed away, and Dimitrieff stood again before my eyes, the same good and loveable being as before.

"You know, perhaps, why I went away," said I.

"Perhaps so," replied he, taking a seat near me; "however, if I know it I cannot say it, but you can—"

"I will—I went away because I was angry with you—not angry—but sad; in fact, I always think that you despise me because I am yet so young."

"Do you know why I *feel* so attracted towards you?" said he, answering my declaration with a look full of kindness and understanding; "why I love you more than my other acquaintances, and the people who form my chief society? I found this out directly: you have the rare and astonishing quality of—sincerity."

"Yes, I always tell just those things which I am ashamed to confess," replied I, "but only to those in whom I trust."

"Ah, but to trust a man you must be his friend completely—and we are not yet friends, Nicola: remember, we spoke of friendship, and agreed, that in order to be real friends, one ought to trust the other implicitly."

"I trust you so far as that I am convinced you will never repeat to anybody a word of what I tell you," said I.

"But perhaps the most interesting and important thoughts are precisely those which we never say one to the other. And the low thoughts—the mean thoughts which, if we knew that we should have to confess them to another, would never have dared to enter our minds—"

"Do you know what I am just thinking, Nicola?" added he, rising, and with a smile taking my hands; "*let us do this*, and you shall see how useful it will be for us mutually; let us pledge our word to say *every-*

thing. We shall then really know each other, and never have anything on our consciences! And, in order to have no fear of strangers, let us make the agreement never to speak to anybody the one about the other. Let us do all this!"

"I agree," replied I.

And we did so *in reality.* What was the result, shall be told at a later time.

Karr says that every attachment has two sides: one loves, and the other allows himself to be loved; one kisses, and the other gives up his cheek. This is perfectly true: in our friendship I kissed, and Dimitrieff gave up his cheek; however, he likewise was ready to kiss me. We loved equally because we knew and appreciated each other thoroughly, but this did not prevent him from having an influence over me, nor me from paying him adoration.

It will be understood that under the influence of Nechludoff I adopted also his direction of mind, the essence of which consisted in an enthusiastic reverence for ideal virtue, and a firm conviction of the calling of men to continual perfection. To ameliorate mankind, to annihilate vice and misery, seemed at that time a task which offered no difficulties—it seemed an easy and simple thing to educate oneself for every virtue and to achieve happiness. . . . . .

And God knows—*were* these blessed dreams of youth ridiculous? and whose fault was it that they were not realized?

THE END.

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